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# THE TIMES

No. 66,403

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

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page 29

**30p**  
EVERY  
WEEKDAY

## Police check hospitals over 'backdoor euthanasia'

BY MICHAEL HORNELL

The deaths of at least 50 hospital patients around Britain are being investigated by police and health officials amid allegations of a creeping tide of backdoor euthanasia.

Seven separate inquiries are looking into claims that doctors have withheld intravenous drips from dehydrated patients, often while they were under sedation, and left them to die from thirst. The patients involved were suffering from strokes, asthma, other common medical conditions and dementia. At least five hospitals — in Derby, Surrey,

Kent and Sussex — are at the centre of police inquiries as a result of relatives' complaints or nurses' whistleblowing, while others have been referred to the General Medical Council and health authorities.

The Crown Prosecution Service will soon decide whether to prosecute in two important cases in which doctors have been accused of manslaughter due to criminal negligence. In the most serious of these, police are investigating 40 deaths at the Kingsway Hospital in Derby, where nurses claimed that dementia sufferers on a psycho-geriatric ward were starved and dehydrated

until they became so weak that they died from infections.

The inquiry was launched in November, 1997, after junior nurses complained, and papers relating to patients at the hospital between 1993 and 1997 are expected to be sent to the CPS in the spring.

In general, the practice of denying nutrition and fluids to patients diagnosed as entering the final phase of a terminal illness is defended as "helping nature to take its course". But some doctors condemn it as involuntary euthanasia.

The cases of patients in persistent vegetative state (PVS) such as the

Hillsborough disaster victim Tony Bland, must be referred to the courts. But a grey ethical area allows doctors to "exercise their clinical judgment" in other cases.

Sources in the medical profession suggest that some may be using that discretion to keep patients quiet and acquisent on the wards. Some who have had a morgue visit, for example, have then been put on a nil-by-mouth regime, sedated and left to dehydrate.

Dr Gillian Craig, a retired consultant geriatrician from Northampton, has told the Royal College of Physicians that water and food

are basic human needs that should not be regarded as treatment that a doctor may give or withhold. "Sadly there are times when sedation without hydration seems mandatory to euthanasia."

This strengthens the hand of those who are pressing to legalise physician-assisted suicide. Good palliative medicine is a major defence against euthanasia, but please heed my warning. Sedation without hydration has enormous potential for misuse. I would like to see this regime consigned to the dustbin of history.

"Attention to hydration is not

merely an option, it should be a basic part of good medicine."

Another case being considered by the CPS concerns the death of an 81-year-old woman who was admitted to hospital in Surrey in May 1997 for treatment for constipation and a urine infection. Her health was otherwise good. She was denied intravenous fluids, in spite of the pleading of relatives.

At one stage a hospital crash team, called at her daughter's insistence by a doctor previously unconnected with the case, carried out emergency measures that required cutting into her neck and groin ar-

teries to insert fluid lines. But septicemia and multiorgan failure had by then set in. Her daughter said: "This was not a dying patient when she was admitted. In fact she was a relatively healthy lady, full of fun, with a relatively common problem. Six days later she was on her deathbed as a direct result of dehydration. I had literally begged them with my hands pressed together in supplication to rehydrate her."

The issue of withholding or withdrawing treatment has been taken

Continued on page 2, col 5

Leading article, page 17

## Saddam tries to lure US jets into trap

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN fighter aircraft attacked Iraqi planes in the air for the first time for six years yesterday after Saddam Hussein apparently tried to lure the Western pilots into a trap.

Six air-to-air missiles were fired at warplanes in the southern no-fly zone, which was being patrolled by F14 Navy jets and F15 fighters. Iraqi MiG and Mirage warplanes committed eight separate violations with between 13 and 15 planes yesterday, but none appeared to have been shot down in the two skirmishes in which missiles were fired — although one is thought to have crashed after running out of fuel.

The Pentagon suspected that Saddam was trying to lure American planes into areas where they would be vulnerable to surface-to-air missiles or surprise attack from other aircraft, but the spokesman Ken Bacon said that American pilots were trained to deal with that.

Yesterday's incidents followed two missile exchanges with Iraqi missile batteries in eight days. Saddam has said that Baghdad will no longer recognize the no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq.

set up after the 1991 Gulf War to protect Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south. But Mr Bacon saw the transgressions as a sign that the Iraqi leader was frustrated and that the mistakes of Operation Desert Fox had done more damage to his military infrastructure than had been thought.

Reporting yesterday's incident, an Iraqi military spokesman said: "The hawks of our brave air force confronted and clashed with the aggressive American and British planes at 10:22 (07:22 GMT) and the enemy planes withdrew. All the planes of our air force returned to their bases safely."

At the same time, Saddam urged Arabs to overthrow their leaders if they were allied to America. "Revolt against foreign powers; their aggression and their armies and chase them. Kick out quislings and its perpators," he said in a speech to mark the anniversary of the foundation of the Iraqi army. "Revolt against those who boast of friendship with the United States, those who are guided by (US Defence Secretary) William Cohen."

The "dwarves" on their thrones will be forced to hear you, or else they will step down to give way for the people to say their opinion and take their action."

The city of Jerusalem was a "humiliated hostage" and the holy Muslim city of Medina, in Saudi Arabia, was "wounded by the presence of foreign soldiers and their spears. Look around to see how mischievous persons have humiliated your sacred places which are now trodden by foreign powers after convincing them so as to hit the great Iraq of Jhad."

The renewed military action came as the White House continued with preparations for Mr Clinton's trial by the Senate, which opens tomorrow. The hearing, once expected to be over by next week, is now thought more likely to be a full-scale trial with witnesses, including Monica Lewinsky.

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Prince Harry shows off his jumping skills on a pair of 3ft snowblades during a photocall at Klosters yesterday

## Prince Harry takes to the air with the latest skiing craze

BY ALAN HAMILTON

PRINCE HARRY gave a powerful boost to the latest winter craze of snowblading yesterday when he executed a small but perfect ski jump in front of the world's media and landed on his feet unaided by the steady influence of poles.

There was no mistaking the generation gap between the 14-year-old Prince and his 50-year-old father as they performed their ritual photocall for the press during their annual skiing holiday at Klosters in the Swiss Alps. The Prince of Wales led off with a small and cautious jump from a modest snow hummock using conventional ski poles.

But his son quickly outshone him. Wearing a pair of 3ft snowblades, less than half the length of traditional skis, given to him by their French manufacturers, Harry soared a good two feet in the air, twice the altitude of his father.

their effort, and landed without faltering.

Photocalls at Klosters are something of a tribulation to the Prince and his sons, so much so that the shy Prince William elected to stay behind this year and join friends in Scotland. The Prince of Wales agrees to one brief meeting with the press in the hope that they will then leave him alone for the rest of his week's holiday.

Last year, in the wake of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, the arrangement worked well. This year the Prince and his younger son, by performing tricks for the cameras, have given the media a bigger appetite for more.

In a brief and amicable exchange with reporters the Prince was asked whether he or his son was the better skier. "That is not a fair question; I suspect you have the advantage," he replied. Asked if he would be sending a postcard to Prince William, the Prince

wryly replied: "I think William will be able to read about it."

Prince Harry is emerging as an enthusiastic and competent skier, more Harry than Eddie the Eagle. Last year he tried Big Foot fun skis; this year he has mastered snowblades, described by

their makers as the snow equivalent of in-line skating, slightly wider and more flexible than regular skis.

The main advantage of snowblades over the Big Foot skis is speed. Their maneuverability also make them good for flips and jumps and snowbladers are set to rival snowboarders for tricks on the snowboarding parks springing up in Alpine resorts. Purists turn their noses up at snowblades as they sink in deep powder snow.

Snowblades do not have the normal ski binding which releases the foot when the wearer falls. Instead they have an adjustable binding which keeps boot and ski together whatever happens.

The Princes are accompanied on their holiday by Tiggy Legge-Bourke, a former nanny to the Prince's children, and Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, the so-called "it" girl whose parents are long-standing skiing partners of the Prince.



## Aden orders out anti-terror Yard squad

FROM DANIEL McGRORY IN ADEN

TWO Scotland Yard detectives were told last night to leave Aden on the first available flight after being refused permission to interview the leader of the gang that abducted 16 Western hostages.

The order to leave the port city came hours after the Governor of Aden promised the anti-terrorists detectives full cooperation. The sudden change of heart by the Yemenis may well cause a serious diplomatic rift.

The joint Scotland Yard and FBI investigation becomes meaningless if the detectives cannot question Abu Hassan or the three terrorists arrested in Aden for trying to blow up British targets.

British diplomats were stunned by the order from Aden's security chief, General Mohammed Saleh Turaik, who had been prepared to let the police visit the scene of the gunfight in which four hostages died. The FBI and the Yard detectives have not yet been ordered out of Yemen. But that may happen if diplomatic relations worsen today.

Swift retaliation is expected

from Whitehall and Washington, who fear Yemen is being used as a base by Islamic terrorists.

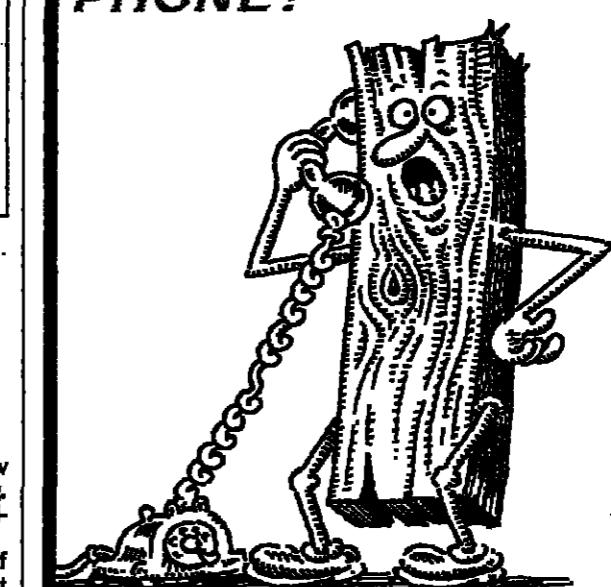
The FBI is convinced the kidnap last week was carried out by Islamic terrorists funded and trained by the Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden, who is accused of being behind a series of bombings on Western targets.

Diplomats will try to get senior Yemeni officials to change their minds today, but the two detectives are returning to the capital Sanaa. The Foreign Office has already strongly criticised the Yemeni government for their handling of this affair.

The Yard detectives have now spent four days being refused any access to any of the key figures involved in the recent terrorist atrocities. The Yemeni authorities fear the Yard team will uncover embarrassing links with major terrorist groups, including bin Laden, whose family have investments in the country.

Port deal, page 12

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# Whelan tipped for job at union

CHARLIE WHELAN, the Chancellor's departing spin-doctor, is tipped for a job with the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Rather than turning his back on frontline politics following a turbulent 20 months in the Treasury, the move would allow the controversial Mr Whelan to remain closely involved in the Westminster scene.

Speculation about such a move has already prompted fears in government circles that Mr Whelan, blamed by ministers for leaking the details of Peter Mandelson's £573,000 home loan, could use the post to act as a thorn in the Government's side. One government

source, asked how Downing Street would react if Mr Whelan moved to the TGWU, said "with absolute horror".

Mr Whelan, said by friends to remain very committed to the world of organised labour, indicated yesterday that he was not looking for a lucrative job in the City, despite rumoured six-figure offers.

Another potential avenue - his hopes of securing a job with his beloved Tottenham Hotspur - also appeared to be dashed last night. Alan Sugar, the chairman of the Premier

League club, interrupted a holiday in the United States to say: "I have had no contact with Mr Whelan and I personally cannot conceive of any role for him at Tottenham."

But the possibility of Mr Whelan working for the TGWU is said to have been raised at the highest levels of the union. Bill Morris, the TGWU general secretary, is a close ally of Mr Brown, and the union has been a consistent supporter of the Chancellor.

Mr Whelan is highly regarded in union circles, both for his ideologi-

cal roots on the left - he is a former communist - and for his ability as a backroom fixer while working for the AEU.

However, such a high-profile return to his roots would unsettle those ministers who want his departure from the Treasury to draw a line both under the affair of Mr Mandelson's home loan and the often bitter personal rivalry between the camp-followers of Mr Brown and the Prime Minister.

Mr Whelan was last night expected to leave his job within days follow-

ing a day of concerted Tory attacks. The Opposition said it was untenable for him to remain in office so close to the March Budget after he had announced his resignation.

In comments interpreted by MPs as a signal to Mr Whelan not to delay his departure, Peter Kilfoyle, minister in the Cabinet Office, said he believed the spin-doctor would be leaving "sooner rather than later".

The job of the TGWU's senior press spokesman has been vacant since the summer and the union is currently undergoing an internal re-

organisation. Mr Morris told *The Times* last night that the possibility of Mr Whelan working for the union was a "hypothetical situation". He added: "You are asking me a question out of the blue. We have no need for a press officer and I do the hiring and firing around here."

Mr Whelan, who was unavailable for comment, will need the "agreement of the Crown" before he takes up any job outside Government. The words are included in his contract, as they are for all special advisers employed by ministers. "The Crown" in this instance means Sir Andrew Turnbull, the Permanent Secretary at the Treasury.

CHRIS MARTIN BAHNEN/PA

## Muslim protesters will dog Blair's trip to South Africa

TONY BLAIR'S first official visit to South Africa risks being overshadowed by demonstrations by angry Muslims protesting over Britain's decision to join in air attacks on Iraq last month.

Muslims against Global Oppression (MAGO) have threatened to hold a mass demonstration in Cape Town on Thursday and further protests in other areas.

The group has insisted that they will hound the prime minister throughout his visit, the first to South Africa since Mr Blair gained power. It has made clear that it is totally opposed to the bombing of Iraq and was "disgusted at the killing of innocent women and children," the group's spokesman has said: "We will hound him wherever he goes."

But Downing Street made clear last night that the prime minister would be taking no extra security personnel with him on his trip, despite fears of mass protests. A spokesman said that Mr Blair had been aware of the threats but had no intention of changing his personal security arrangements.

A spokesman said that the South African police would play a large role in ensuring adequate security during the visit and the prime minister was happy to rely on this, said the spokesman.

**Demonstrators will hold mass meetings against air strikes, reports Jill Sherman**

It is understood that security arrangements in South Africa are always very tight during visits of heads of state or government.

Mr Blair will be collected this morning from the Seychelles where he is holidaying with his wife and family, before flying to Pretoria for the start of his first visit to South Africa since he became prime minister.

The prime minister's spokesman insisted that there would be no extra cost to the taxpayer to divert to the Seychelles on a chartered British Airways Jumbo jet.

The aim of the visit is to bid farewell to the outgoing President Nelson Mandela and strengthen ties with Thabo Mbeki, the deputy president who is likely to succeed Mr Mandela later this year.

During his visit Mr Blair will have several meetings with Mr Mbeki to discuss new

investment and defence orders and an aid package for South Africa and the whole continent.

Mr Blair's spokesman said that the two men would discuss defence orders worth over £1 billion which covered a range of equipment and had already involved extensive negotiations.

The spokesman also suggested that the trade links between the two countries could be supported by up to £4 billion in extra British investment.

The prime minister is determined to further develop Britain's relations with South Africa and Africa as a whole. He will be discussing his government's "Third Way" approach which was similar to some policy thinking in South Africa.

The prime minister will also ask President Mandela to continue applying pressure to persuade Colonel Gaddafi to agree a trial in The Hague for the two Libyans suspected of the Lockerbie Pan Am jet bombs. In addition give President Mandela a detailed background on Britain's decision to join the US in the raids on Iraq.

During his visit he will also meet British defence advisers who have been helping to reconstruct South Africa's defence forces into a volunteer army capable of playing key peacekeeping roles.

THE magnificent white-tailed eagle had virtually vanished from Scotland until the reintroduction programme started in 1968

## Eagle off the danger list

breeding on Skye in 1916. Only the odd migrant was seen on British shores until 1968, when a project to reintroduce the white-tailed eagle, also known as the sea eagle, was launched on Rinn in the Inner Hebrides using birds from Norway.

The huge birds - scientific name *Haliaeetus albicilla* - slowly but surely began to re-

establish themselves and breed in small numbers. Now half a dozen pairs are breeding successfully in a good year - enough for them to be removed from the official list of the British Birds Rarities Committee.

□ The Savi's warbler is the latest officially endangered bird after numbers plummeted to one or two pairs.



Savi's warbler: endangered

## Care in community no threat, say psychiatrists

BY SUSIE STEINER

PSYCHIATRISTS provoked anger yesterday by saying that care in the community had no effect on the number of murders committed by the mentally ill.

Research by two forensic psychiatrists for the Institute of Psychiatry showed a steady drop in the proportion of murders committed by the mentally ill since the Fifties, despite the closure of mental hospitals and the adoption of community care.

There is a great anxiety that, with the advent of community care, that all of us become much more vulnerable," said Professor Pamela Taylor, one of the report's authors, at a

press conference yesterday. "The figures simply don't support that. There is no evidence to support the notion that community care has influenced the figures or made society a more mentally ill.

While around 40 people are killed each year by people with mental disorders, the researchers emphasised that around 4,000 died annually on Britain's roads.

Michael Howlett, director of the Zito Trust, said: "To compare the chances of being killed by a mentally ill person with the chances of being killed in a car crash is not only meaningless but insensitive to the feelings of families who

have been bereaved. What the death of Jonathan Zito in 1992 exposed in graphic detail was the failure of services to cope with seriously difficult patients who are abandoned by those responsible for their welfare.

It is remarkable that psychiatrists, who have been as vociferous as anyone in their criticism of Government policy, should now appear to be saying that root-and-branch reform is not necessary."

Marjorie Wallace, chief executive of SANE, said: "It benefits no one to ignore the flaws of a system whose failings are exposed time and again when a tragedy is investigated."

## Pellet boy critical

A schoolboy was unconscious last night after he was shot in the head with an airgun pellet while playing with friends in Clacton, Essex. Richard Bryant, 13, was transferred to a specialist neurological unit after it was found that the pellet was lodged close to his brain. A 14-year-old boy was later arrested on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm.

## Train hits car

A passenger train caught fire after vandals pushed a burning car into its path. There were more than 40 passengers on board, all of whom escaped injury. The two-carriage train crashed into the stolen car on a level crossing near Cwmbran, South Wales. Flames engulfed one of the carriages, shattering windows and melting seats.

## MoD sex case

A senior army officer, cleared of scandalous conduct after an affair with a Wren, started a sex discrimination case against the Ministry of Defence at Southampton. Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Pope, 42, was suspended after a court martial. Lieutenant-Commander Karen Pearce, with whom he had the affair, is being considered for promotion.

## Shifting views on euthanasia

### MEDICAL BRIEFING

lives had become a misery, we did nothing to shorten a life deliberately when the only objective was the earlier death of the patient. Older doctors are shocked at the idea of deliberately dehydrating patients.

All doctors realise that there

are patients who are unlikely to make a good recovery but are likely to survive. A problem is that, whereas a young doctor the quality of life of these patients may seem so low as to be not worth keeping, most of the patients are

very grateful for what life they have. Research has shown that the criteria considered to warrant euthanasia by people who believe in it when they are young and active become much more stringent once the person questioned is older and nearer death.

If fluids are withdrawn death is inevitable from dehydration within days. If the patient is conscious the only way of saving them the discomfort, pain and restlessness that would precede their death is to tranquillise them, even if the sedatives prescribed will further hasten their end. If the same sedatives were given as one massive dose nobody would have any doubts that this was euthanasia; and even if they are given in smaller doses over a period of time, the end result is the same.

It is ironical that before a

life-support machine can be

turned off in the case of some

one who, for instance, has suf-

fered an irreparable head in-

jury, the procedures that have

to be fulfilled are exhaustive

and the decision is taken at the

highest level.

If, on the other hand, fluids

are to be withheld so that the

patient will surely die, this

may be at the behest of junior

staff.

Continued from page 1 up by the British Medical Association in a huge consultation exercise and the association's medical ethics committee hopes to produce practical guidelines when it is complete.

The consultation paper,

*Withdrawing and Withholding Treatment*, asks whether

food and drink might be with-

drawn from patients such as

severely impaired stroke vic-

tims as well as those in a per-

sistent vegetative state.

But Dr Craig said: "This is

already happening without

any regulation whatsoever.

Moreover, the BMA are clearly

aware of this. It can happen

when the carers have reached the limit of their resources and are no longer able to stand patients' problems without anxiety, guilt or anger. A sedative will alter the situation and produce a patient who, if not dead, is at least quiet."

She also spoke about the

danger of grouping together

patients who might be misdiagnosed as terminally ill in institutions where staff are orientated towards death and non-intervention. She cited the case

of an elderly man sent to hospital for terminal care with a diagnosis of cancer. The geriatrician felt the diagnosis was not well established and found the

main problem was dehydration.

With intravenous rehy-

dratation and intensive nursing,

he recovered and went home

for 18 months.

Some doctors are concerned

over the distress dehydration

can cause even in PVS pa-

tients. Dr Anthony Cole, a con-

sultant paediatrician at Worcester Royal Infirmary and chairman of a Roman Catholic ethics committee, said: "There is some scientific

evidence that, if the base of the

brain is intact, patients will ex-

perience thirst even if the high-

er functions have been lost.

Death from dehydration is

painful and unacceptable."

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# I'll do it my way, says new man at Dome

LORD Falconer of Thoroton yesterday promised to "crack the whip" to get the Millennium Dome ready in time as he visited the site in Greenwich for the first time.

In the first day of his new job as Dome Minister, the peer praised the "immense" work of his predecessor, Peter Mandelson, but insisted that he would do things his way.

He spent the day in a series of briefings, being brought up to date on the progress of the Dome and the work needed to complete the £758 million project on time.

After touring the site, Lord Falconer said it was "very, very impressive", and brushed aside Tory accusations that he had been appointed as a result of his close friendship with Tony Blair. "It's for others to judge what my qualities are," he said. "The Prime Minister

**Lord Falconer  
admits Jubilee  
Line may not be  
completed in  
time, reports  
James Landale**

thought I was the right man for the job, but only time will tell if he was right."

He added: "I don't think anyone can fill Peter Mandelson's boots. I could never emulate Peter in respect of the work he did for the Dome. I shall just have to do things in my own way."

Asked if he would be the "ringmaster" that the Dome needed, he said: "I don't think

it's going to be necessary to crack the whip. But if it is necessary, crack the whip I will."

Although Mr Mandelson was almost obsessive in his support for the Dome and over the last 18 months did much of the work necessary to get the project up and running, Lord Falconer still faces a substantial in-tray.

As the Government share-

holder in the New Millennium Experience Company —

which runs the day to day

work — he will not take operational decisions. But he is responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time and fulfills all the Government's aims. He will also have to be the public face of the Dome in Government.

Top of his work list is the need to find more private sponsorship. The company has so far secured pledges for

£120 million, £30 million short of its target.

As important are the worries about London Underground's new Jubilee Line, which will link the Dome to the centre of the capital. Many fear it will not be ready in time, yet more than 40 per cent of the 12 million expected visitors are forecast to use the line to reach the site. Although the line is the responsibility of the

Transport Department, Lord Falconer will spend much time urging his colleagues to make sure that it is completed in time. "We believe it will be, but I don't think there's any body in the world who can completely guarantee it."

The peer will also have to ensure that the 14 themed "zones" within the Dome are completed on time and fit with the Government's criteria.

Ministers stipulated that they should be educational, inspiring, and that they involve the whole country.

A fourth job for Lord Falconer is what to do with the Dome after the millennium celebrations. Several companies have expressed an interest in turning the Dome into a convention centre, a regional sports centre or a massive leisure complex. Four consortia

— including a Hollywood film studio — were yesterday understood to have recently proposed turning the site into a film and television production complex.

Lord Falconer and Cabinet Office officials will not consider formal bids until later this month.

Lord Falconer will also have to start preparations for the massive New Year's Eve party at the Dome, which is expected

to attract at least 10,000 people.

Until 18 months ago, Charlie Falconer was an anonymous barrister who just happened to be a school friend of the Prime Minister. Ennobled and thrust into the Government, he has been equally unknown as Solicitor General, then as Cabinet Office Minister.

Yesterday he took his first steps towards becoming a public figure.



Lord Falconer at the Dome site yesterday: "I don't think anyone can fill Peter Mandelson's boots. I shall just have to do things in my own way"

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Babysitter on murder charge

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A 12-year-old girl has appeared before a youth court in Manchester charged with the murder of a 16-month-old toddler. The girl, who cannot be named, is accused of fatally injuring Molly Adams at the child's home in Crumpsall, Manchester, while babysitting last month. The toddler died in hospital from a fractured skull and brain injuries, but the girl denies that she deliberately harmed her. She was remanded on bail until February 16.

### Hoddle divorced

The 19-year marriage of Glenn Hoddle and his wife, Anne, ended yesterday after a court was told that he admitted adultery. The divorce was granted to Mrs Hoddle on the ground that their marriage had irretrievably broken down.

### Water firm fined

Anglian Water Services was fined £10,000 for supplying unfit water to Halstead in Essex in December 1997 after a burst main and a drop in a reservoir level. One woman found black water coming from her cold tap.

### Gem of a man

Police have praised the honesty of Dave Gilbert, a railway worker who handed in £4,000 worth of stolen jewellery that he found in a bag on the platform of the Maidstone West station in Kent. The haul has been returned to its owners.

### Burglary shock

A man returned home the day after his wife's death to find that burglars had broken in and stolen her wedding and engagement rings from a cupboard. George Saul, 80, of Bradford, had been married to Elsie, 79, for 58 years.

### Coin identified

An Anglo-Saxon gold coin found near Gloucester has been identified as a thrysus. It differs from five similar coins discovered at Crondall, Kent, in 1828 because the letters around the edge are thought to spell out the word Wimerton.

## Passenger tried to open jet door

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, AVIATION CORRESPONDENT

A DRUNKEN passenger on a transatlantic jet tried to open an exit door at 30,000 feet as cabin crew and other passengers struggled to restrain him.

Witnesses said the man, a 31-year-old Scot, went "berserk", lashing out and injuring a crew member and three passengers. The incident, on board a Continental Airlines flight to Gatwick, was described by police there as one of the worst cases of air rage they had dealt with.

The aircraft's second officer was called from the flight deck to try to subdue the man, who broke free and tried to open the rear door. Although locking systems and pressurised cabins should make it impossible

to open an exit door in flight, any threat to do so can be deemed an offence.

Action intended to endanger life is among the most serious offences under aviation law. It carries a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment and a £5,000 fine.

Police at Gatwick were alerted as the aircraft, flying from Newark, New Jersey, approached the airport on Monday night. By the time it had landed staff had managed to subdue the man and secure him to his seat using handcuffs, which are carried by most airlines on long-haul flights.

A man was released on bail by Sussex police last night.

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# Doctors cleared of killing cancer boy

Mother attacks decision to drop case, write Tim Jones and Alex O'Connell

Two senior doctors were cleared yesterday of the manslaughter of a 12-year-old cancer victim as an Old Bailey judge condemned Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children for a "cluster of accidents and misunderstandings".

Richie Williams, who had been given a 75 per cent chance of surviving chemotherapy, died in agony five days after a drug was injected into his spine instead of a vein.

Charges against John Lee, 34, a specialist registrar in paediatric anaesthetics, and Dermot Murphy, 34, a registrar in haematology, were withdrawn after an important prosecution witness changed his mind over their degree of culpability.

After the decision, the boy's mother, Dolores Williams, 37, who is pursuing a civil claim for damages, said: "Instead of helping him to recover from his illness, Richie was injected with a drug that killed him. We expect hospitals to help to cure our children, not give them treatment that kills."

Mrs Williams, of Cufford, southeast London, who has two older daughters, added: "We are still devastated by the way Richie died. He suffered a great deal of pain in the days before his death because of the negligent treatment he received. The doctors never personally apologised to me, Richard's dad or his sister. It could go a long way."

The Crown Prosecution Service had relied on the evidence of a prosecution witness, Alan Aitkenhead, in its decision to press charges against the two men. At first, Professor Aitken-



Dolores and Richie Williams, who died aged 12

head stated that Dr Lee's conduct over the injection had fallen "seriously and significantly below that which could be demanded of him".

Later Professor Aitkenhead, Professor of Anaesthesia at Nottingham University, decided that significant failures in the system operated by the hospital at the time had greater responsibility than he had first thought.

As a result, the CPS was advised to drop the prosecution because it was unlikely to secure a conviction. Yesterday the two men were found not guilty by the Recorder of London, Judge Michael Hyam.

Richard Horwell, for the prosecution, said that, at the time of the incident, in July 1997, Richie was in his 14th week of intensive treatment and was about to have his last course of chemotherapy. Mr Horwell told the court that there had been a number of failures that had led to the boy's death. Before the fatal injection, the boy had eaten a bis-

chemotherapy into the spine. Mr Horwell said one of the two drugs used, Vincristine, could be taken only intravenously and, if injected into the spine, invariably proved fatal.

At Great Ormond Street, Richie, instead of being admitted to the Lion Ward, which specialised in such treatment, was taken to the more general Nuffield Ward. From there, a nurse wrongly sent Vincristine to the operating theatre in spite of a rule that stated it should never be allowed in. Mr Horwell said: "If it had not been sent to the theatre, Richie would not have died."

Robert Gresham, the hospital's chief executive, said the two doctors had been suspended and would now be subject to an inquiry. Its conclusions would be sent to the General Medical Council, which would review their position.

A spokesman for Great Ormond Street said it had taken steps to improve communication and clinical procedures.



Dr Lee, left, and Dr Murphy, from Great Ormond Street, were cleared of manslaughter at the Old Bailey yesterday

Runaway couple spotted on train

## Pair must wait to know fate

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE two Great Ormond Street doctors will continue to be suspended from duty until the case has been studied by an NHS tribunal. Only if they are cleared by the tribunal will they be able to resume their specialised jobs.

If they are found guilty by the tribunal, the case may be referred to the General Medical Council to decide whether they should be struck off the medical register, but that is unlikely to happen now, they have been cleared by the courts.

Peter Tomlin, secretary of the Society of Clinical Psychiatrists, which champions the cause of suspended doctors, said that the continuing suspension was another example of the "unfair double jeopardy"

## Warning after more meningitis deaths

BY A CORRESPONDENT

HEALTH experts warned the public to be vigilant for the symptoms of meningitis after two more deaths from the disease were confirmed yesterday.

At least nine deaths from meningitis have been reported over Christmas and the new year, with most of the victims children or teenagers.

The Meningitis Trust said: "Sadly, the reports we are seeing are pretty typical. December or early January are the peak times for meningitis cases. You might see an increase from the average 35 cases a week to around 70 cases."

Meningitis can be passed from one person to another by sneezing, coughing or kissing. The trust spokeswoman said the increase in colds over the winter months made people especially vulnerable. "It's important people are vigilant at this time of year. They need to be alert for the signs of meningitis and contact a doctor as soon as symptoms appear."

It was confirmed yesterday that a five-month-old boy from Dinas Powys, near Cardiff, had died in Cardiff's University Hospital from the serious meningococcal strain. A 42-year-old woman, from Taib's Well, near Cardiff, died in East Glamorgan Hospital.

Symptoms of meningitis include severe headache, vomiting, joint and muscle pains and an aversion to bright light. A rash that does not disperse under pressure indicates meningococcal septicaemia, the most dangerous form.

## Scientists discover cancer protector

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A WAY of making cancer cells commit suicide has been developed by scientists who believe the discovery could lead to a new generation of drugs to tackle the disease.

A team from Brunel University in West London has found a way of neutralising the enzyme that protects cancer cells from the natural ageing process that destroys normal cells.

Robert Newbold, who led the research, said: "An international race to find this natural inhibitor has been running for many years and this latest discovery has really put British scientists a step ahead."

Normally, old or damaged cells stop dividing and self-destruct in order to prevent any mutations being duplicated and growing into tumours. However, cancer cells contain an enzyme called telomerase, which overrides this natural process, so they ignore the self-destruct messages and continue to multiply indefinitely.

Reporting the findings in today's issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, Professor Newbold says they have now discovered a way of switching off the enzyme so that the normal process takes over. The next stage will be to find ways to mimic the group of genes that effectively control the natural ageing process of cells. It is hoped this will lead to the synthetic production of drugs to block telomerase and halt the growth of tumours.

# Dear Colleagues,

This Thursday I will be leaving the

office at 8.00pm at the latest.

Not 8.30pm, not 8.15pm, not even

8.01pm, but 8.00pm.

This gives me a whole hour in which to get home and secure a good seat for the new series of Friends and ER.

I regret any inconvenience this

may cause but unfortunately it's

unavoidable.

For maximum effect:

1. Place on photocopier and enlarge by 141%.
2. Place the two sections together.

New series of Friends and ER.  
Thursday 7th January from 9pm.  
See it first on Sky One.

SKY  
one

# The Thatcher theory of women's success

Study shows female managers go to great lengths to appear more macho than men, writes Alexandra Frean

WOMEN who succeed as managers do not do so because of their feminine characteristics, such as sensitivity and warmth. According to new research, they do well because they adopt an aggressive, macho personality.

A four-year study of the psychological make-up of more than 1,200 managers has found that the basic differences between the sexes in the general population are largely non-existent among managers.

The survey contradicts claims this week by the style writer Peter York, who said his own studies had found that women managers displaying motherly qualities were more successful.

Tuvia Melamed, an occupational psychologist and senior consultant for the recruitment consultancy Capita Ras, who conducted the research, said that women managers not only had to behave like their male colleagues to succeed, but also frequently had to be tougher and meaner.

"Gender matters very little," he said. "What characterises managers most is that they are tough-minded, macho and socially bold. Many of the women we studied said they felt they had to be more like a man than men. Forget about the caring, sharing Nineties and politi-

## TIDY DESK SHOWS A NEGATIVE MIND

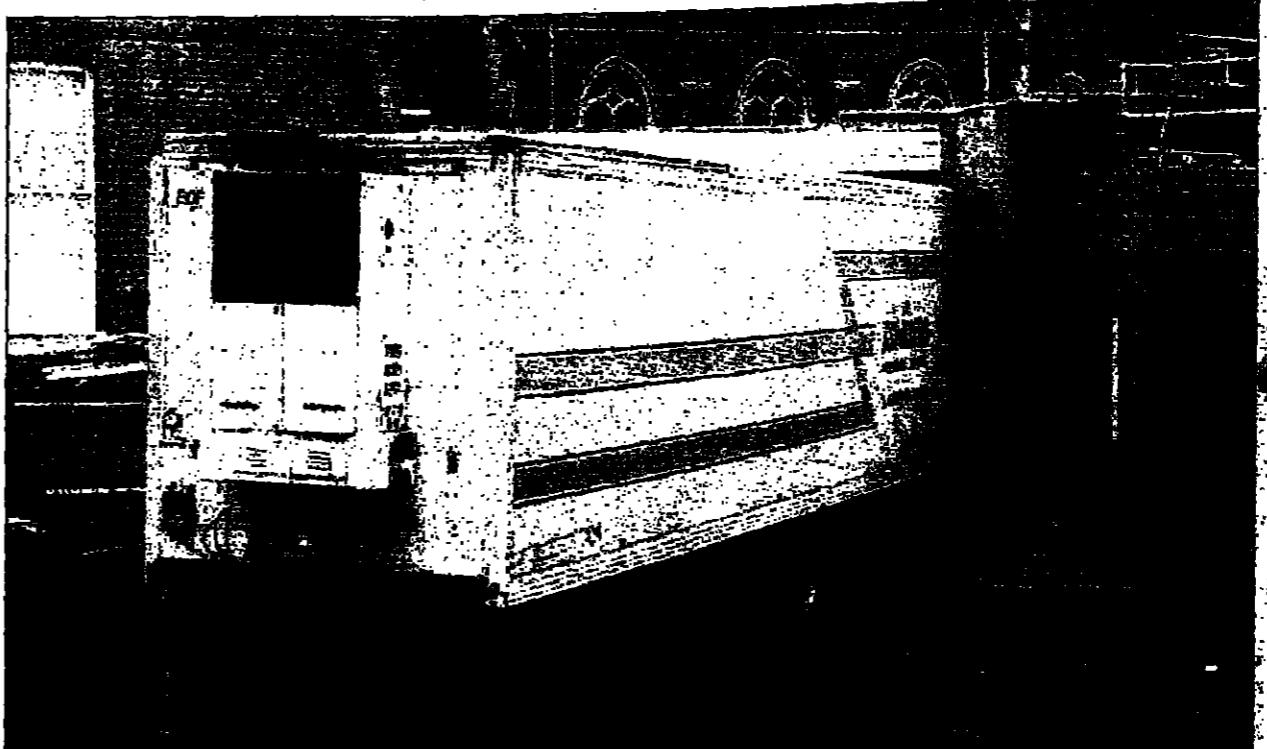
People who spend a lot of time arranging the objects on their desks to ensure that they are "just right" before they start work are neither lazy or sick, but are victims of negative avoidance syndrome. Robert Briner, a lecturer in occupational psychology at Birkbeck College, London, said that, when workers procrastinated or spent excessive time on relatively easy tasks rather than tackle more difficult or larger tasks, it was usually because they were trying to avoid being told off or being embarrassed in front of colleagues. Mr Briner suggests in a study that managers should try to identify the specific negative outcome that employees are trying to avoid and redesign their jobs to include more positive goals.

views with 294 female and 949 male managers, whose personalities were then analysed and compared with gender norms for the general population. The interviews took place between 1993 and 1997.

Dr Melamed found that, while many women managers had a "built-in tendency" to behave like men — what he described as "the Margaret Thatcher phenomenon" — many had to work very hard at putting on their macho act. This could make it difficult for companies to retain female executives for any length of time.

"A lot of women said they had difficulties with having to act tough and there was a higher level of stress among women managers than men," Dr Melamed said. "A lot of women said that it frequently made them question what they were doing with their lives and wonder if they should be doing something else."

Equal opportunities campaigners described Dr Melamed's research as unhelpful. Ann Chant, director of Opportunity 2000, the national campaign started in 1991 to increase the quality and quantity of women's participation in the workforce, said: "Our campaign research and our own member companies' experience shows that it is absolutely not the case that women have to behave like men to succeed. Women and men have very different styles, each of which can be very valuable. Surely a mix of styles is the most valuable."



The refrigerated lorry being used as a temporary mortuary by the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital

## Dobson fears NHS could not cope with flu epidemic

Warning as hospital hires mobile mortuary, reports Ian Murray

bodies and all families will receive the same level of service. As the number of cases begins to rise, many other hospitals have taken the precaution of cancelling all but emergency operations. Among those doing so is New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton, where many staff have been working double shifts throughout the holiday, and all hospitals in the Sandwell Health Authority area in the West Midlands. Walsall Manor Hospital has 278 emergency admissions over four days, 100 more than in the same week a year ago.

Mr Dobson admitted that the NHS was under severe pressure. Staff were at full stretch, doing an excellent job of handling high numbers of cases, he said, but, if there was an epidemic, "it would be very difficult to cope".

A diesel-powered mobile cold store has been fitted out for the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital with racks for 36 bodies.

It is expected to be needed for at least another two weeks to cope with an unusually high number of deaths, particularly among frail elderly people, who are especially susceptible to flu. The hospital, which has

cancelled all non-emergency operations to make the maximum number of beds available for flu patients, has been warned that eight out of ten families in the Norfolk area are likely to develop flu, cold or cough symptoms this winter.

The holiday period has made the situation worse because fewer funerals have taken place. Peter Moffat, spokesman for the hospital, said:

"The rise in the number of deaths coincided with fewer funeral directors arriving at the hospital to collect bodies for burial and cremation. We ran out of capacity in our mortuary so we had to bring in a temporary mobile refrigerated unit to help with cold storage."

Malcolm Stimp, chief executive of the hospital trust, said:

"The public can be assured that the deceased are treated with the utmost respect by our staff, who are working under extreme pressure. The hospital has a purpose-built room for relatives and friends to view

the 10,000 units of blood that are needed every day. At present it holds only 14,832 units — less than 1½ days' supply — and demand is outstripping supply. Reserves fell by 2,500 units in the 24 hours up to yesterday morning.

The shortage of O-group supplies is particularly worrying. Although 46 per cent of the population needs this group, there are only 3,098 units in the available stocks.

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For the first time the authority has taken television advertising in an attempt to attract the donors it needs to provide

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# Villagers save their green from bulldozers

Helen Johnstone on campaign that raised £350,000 in just over a year

VILLAGERS have saved a medieval green from development after their campaign, backed by the Prince of Wales, raised the £350,000 needed to buy it in just over a year.

Residents in Kingsland, Herefordshire, which has a population of 1,000 and dates from the 7th century, were incensed at plans for 13 houses and parking for 34 cars, obliterating views of the adjoining 12th-century castle and 13th-century church.

They sold everything from marmalade to manure to raise the £350,000, which they reached with the aid of a bank loan of £94,000 and interest-free loans totalling £120,000.

The remainder was raised through events organised by the Kingsland Millennium Green Trust. The Prince donated a set of table mats, which raised £125 at one auction, and the Bishop of Hereford, the Right Rev John Oliver, offered lunch at the House of Lords.

Workmen had already begun excavating 600 tonnes of soil

from the 1½-acre site when a group of local businesswomen approached the Birmingham-based developers, Beeches Two, with a plan to buy it back for the village. They were given a week to gauge local opinion, which resulted in 98 per cent of residents supporting their plan.

Within 24 hours Patricia Pefferay, 51, organised a public meeting at which it was agreed to ask the developer to allow a month for a proposal to be put together. She said yesterday: "I'd heard about the plans to put up a housing estate a few weeks earlier, and I was incensed. I thought that the best way to save the green would be to buy it, but I had no idea how to until a local dignitary told me about the Countryside Commission Millennium Fund."

The Countryside Commission backed the project with a grant of £55,000 from the Millennium Green Fund; other donations from environmental trusts totalled £42,000. Jim Langridge, of the Midlands

Katie Eastaugh, left, with other members of the Kingsland Millennium Green Trust, which raised £350,000 to buy the village green from developers

branch of the Countryside Commission, said yesterday: "We had more than 100 applications for grants from the Millennium Green Fund, but we found that this bid was one of the more businesslike and organised. Plus, we couldn't help but be impressed by the villagers' enthusiasm and energy. Normally it takes two to three

months to put a bid together, but these ladies did it in a couple of weeks."

Mrs Pefferay, chairman of the trust and an education consultant who has lived in the village for 16 years, said people had been prepared to sit in front of the bulldozers to save the green, one of few remaining green sites within the

village. "By October we'd held about 40 fundraising events which raised £12,000, and after seven months we had raised £22,000."

"Prince Charles donated a set of table mats depicting some of his paintings, and a friend at the BBC took four people on a tour of the studios for £320. We've probably

raised that the green must have been there since the village was founded."

Stuart Harper, managing director of Beeches Two, said: "I doubted they would succeed in raising that kind of money."

He added: "I take my hat off to them. We've lost a site, but we made an acceptable return."

However, ITN's *News at Ten* to be axed in the next few weeks, proved to be the most popular nightly news programme with an average audience of 5.7 million. This compared with 5.2 million for the *Nine O'Clock News*.

Vanessa Feltz, who left ITV for the BBC after being refused a salary of £25 million, attracted under a million viewers when *The Vanessa Show* was launched on Monday.

## Big Brother cleans up 'high-rise slums'

NIGEL HAWKES at the geographers' conference

Council programme measuring the effects of information technology on society

"There were graffiti, broken glass and rubbish everywhere. The lifts had been neglected, and the area around the blocks was ugly. When I was last there, in August, everything had changed. Aesthetically it looked a lot better, as the ground floors were let. Previously nobody would live in them. The blocks had been painted, money spent on maintenance, and the tenants were happier."

The technology that makes such changes possible include closed-circuit television cameras, which feed pictures to a concierge, who can also monitor the comings and goings of the tenants by records made every time they use their keys, and a direct link from every flat to the concierge by fibre-optic cable so that tenants can make

immediate contact if problems arise.

The monitoring of movement soon makes it clear if any tenants are not actually living in their flats, but merely using them as "Giro drops", postal addresses to which they are not entitled. It can also indicate whether a tenant is ill and has not left the block for several days.

"The majority of tenants are in favour of the changes," Dr McGrail said. "Those who aren't have left. Those who are there now say they feel more secure, are more willing to chat to neighbours or get into lifts with strangers."

Most of Britain's tower blocks were built between 1955 and 1974, but disinvestment with them set in in the 1990s. With many planners feeling that the social problems that plagued many of them were incurable, demolition seemed the only option. Some have been knocked down, but the cost of demolition — about £500,000 per block — is often prohibitive.

"Housing departments are reluctant to spend that sort of money when it could be used for the direct benefit of other tenants," Dr McGrail said. Tower blocks are also expensive to run, costing more than they produce in rents, so selling them to private developers is seldom an option.

Dr McGrail believes that the benefits of surveillance technology are such that many tower blocks could now be kept in use for another 30 years or so. While never likely to be the Utopia that some architects envisaged, he said, they did have a future.

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Cameras cut crime on Edinburgh's Gracemount estate

## Pitfalls of flexible hours

FLEXIBLE working patterns, which the Government sees as the key to preserving family life, result in people seeing less of their families than before, the conference was told.

Diane Perrons, of the London School of Economics, studied patterns of work in supermarkets for the European Commission and found that, while flexible working gave many advantages to employers, reducing overtime payments and National Insurance costs, the benefits to those employed were less apparent.

On the positive side, it gave women an opportunity to get into the labour force, with working hours that enabled them to look after their children. The drawback was that parents never had any time to spend together. "One comes home and the other goes off," Dr Perrons said.

## Ice Age may be 50,000 years late

MANMADE global warming may postpone the arrival of the next Ice Age, the conference was told. Instead of ice spreading down across Scotland and the North of England within the next 55,000 years, the deep freeze may be delayed for a further 50,000 years or more, Paul Burgess, of the University of East Anglia, said.

The ice will certainly come, however, as a result of changes in the Earth's orbit, tilt and precession — the process by which the seasons shift slowly over time.

Using a computer model developed at the University of Louvain in Belgium, Mr Burgess and his colleagues Jean Peltokof and Clare Goddess combined these long-term cycles with the burning of fossil fuels, which produces the carbon dioxide that contributes to global warming.

Mr Burgess said that, using carbon dioxide levels found in ice cores, the model correctly identified the extent of the last

glacial maximum, when ice spread over Scotland and much of northern England and Wales.

Given natural levels of carbon dioxide, the model predicts a similar ice coverage in 55,000 to 60,000 years. Factoring in manmade global warming at moderate levels delays the growth of ice, but when growth starts it is much swifter and a complete glaciation is achieved on the same timescale.

Only if extreme global warming is assumed is there any delay in glaciation, but it will still occur about 110,000 years from now.

### NET LINKS

<http://www.geog.le.ac.uk>  
Conference programme on the Leicester University Geography Department website.

<http://www.rgs.org> The Royal Geographical Society — Institute of British Geographers site



## Viewers like new look of TV news

BY CAROL MIDGLEY  
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

REVAMPED versions of the heavyweight television news programmes, *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News*, attracted nearly half a million more viewers this week.

BBC2's *Newsnight*, which has been redesigned to give a more viewer-friendly look, improved its ratings from an average 1.1 million to 1.4 million when it unveiled its new image on Monday night. On the same night, *Channel 4 News*, whose set has undergone a facelift that includes purple sofas and orange desks, attracted 900,000 viewers compared with its usual 800,000.

The BBC and ITV both claimed victory in the ratings during 1998. Broadcasters' Audience Research Board figures show that the BBC's *Six O'Clock News* was the most popular programme, with an average of 5.8 million viewers. ITN's early evening news programme attracted 4.3 million.

However, ITN's *News at Ten* to be axed in the next few weeks, proved to be the most popular nightly news programme with an average audience of 5.7 million. This compared with 5.2 million for the *Nine O'Clock News*.

Vanessa Feltz, who left ITV for the BBC after being refused a salary of £25 million, attracted under a million viewers when *The Vanessa Show* was launched on Monday.

**BRADFORD & BINGLEY BUILDING SOCIETY**

## Important Notice to Members from your Board of Directors

We have received a Members' resolution calling on us to take steps to convert your Building Society from a Mutual into a Plc (public company) Bank.

As the resolution has been endorsed by the required 50 Members it will be put to your vote as part of our Annual General Meeting (AGM) next April. Members should be aware that, by law, the resolution can only be used to guide the Board. It is not binding.

Your Board is unanimous in its conviction that becoming a Bank is not in the interest of our 2.5 million current Members and their successors.

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- Explain why staying mutual makes sense
- Outline plans for the future, and
- Encourage you to participate in the Society's future by voting on this important AGM issue

Because the Members' resolution could encourage "carpetbaggers" to swamp our offices we have decided not to accept new savings Members until after our AGM.

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Lindsay Mackinlay  
Chairman

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## European Union debates education

The EU today threw its member states into some confusion about the long-term future of its proposed education policy. Education ministers are to meet today in Bruges to thrash out a compromise which should set the primary, secondary, and further education policies for the next millennium.

The difficulties appear to be centred around the previously unnoticed fact that different countries actually speak different languages. Therefore the proposed plan which means an across-the-board curriculum, has had to be radically rethought.

The idea, which seemed promising, from nursery school to post-graduate studies, every student within the EU would be doing exactly the same lessons at exactly the same time. It was

proposed that lessons would be based in Munich at a virtual educational university, lessons according to a central timetable. The 300-million

hours of tuition would have the lessons beamed into their own personal VR helmets, so students at one stroke the conventional idea of going to school.

Everything was going to plan until someone believed to be a lowly clerk at the European Education Ministry, pointed out that the idea was in fact completely useless. The vast majority of people would not be able to understand it because they do not speak the language in which the

Professor Terry Slade, consultant education specialist to the EU, said that the idea was not in the water as some had suggested. "A little tuning is all that is required," he said. "There are many avenues to be explored. Revamping EU as a universal language is one of these, for one, to speak another. I personally think the use of minority languages is a viable option, although the communication is more arcane than pure mathematics or physics. This could be more difficult."

However, trials are already underway using mime troupes

conducible by people in black leotards and sad paper faces, resulting in been seen especially in the EU's capital, Brussels, where accidents are frequent at rush hour and caused maximum in the commercial district.

Today Club, for all purposes were, when he heard the last proposals. "What we here is nothing less than the emergence of the top nation as a hobbystic super-state sceptered isle. I'm

thinking that the English

comprehensive system

is flawless, but by God

managed to turn

it into a wonderful

think of all the

things of all the

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A landlord's stalker on the Knoydart estate. The National Lottery rejected its residents' application under present law to buy the land

## Crofters must use lottery cash to buy lairds' land

SNP says 'cheapskate' changes in Scottish estate law are tailored for urban voters, writes Fraser Nelson

NATIONAL Lottery money is to be used instead of public funds to help Scottish communities to buy estates from their lairds. But they will have to raise most of the money themselves.

The reforms, announced yesterday in Edinburgh, will end almost 900 years of feudalism and will give the Government powers to evict absentee and neglectful landowners. Ministers said the powers are intended as a deterrent and would seldom or never be used.

Crofters will be given first refusal on any land that comes on the market. Lord Sewel, the Scottish Office minister heading the Government's Land Reform Committee, said that communities seeking to buy es-

tates can expect only the new Land Fund, created with lottery money, to top up privately raised money.

However, he said that they will have their task made easier by the proposals. "The money available from the Land Fund will be enough to put the final pieces on a bid. It will not be covered with public funds."

The plans drew criticism from the Scottish National Party, which accused Lord Sewel of drawing up a "cheapskate" version designed to appeal to urban voters. Rob Gibson, a member of the SNP National Executive, said: "We are talking about people's lives here. We don't think it should be a lottery or be tied in with a

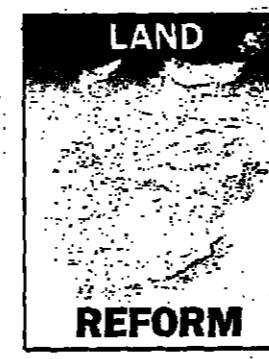
lottery; it needs state funds. Labour is obviously not taking the issue seriously."

The lottery commissioners have already rejected four appeals to fund community buyouts: two for the island of Eigg, and for the estates of Knoydart and Arbrach.

The Scottish Landowners Federation, which represents 80 per cent of lairds, attacked plans to evict bad landowners.

Andrew Dingwall-Fordyce, its convener, said: "This is opening up a hornet's nest which will end in the European Court. If the community decides it doesn't like its owner, why should he have his land taken away if he is doing the best he can?"

Lord Sewel said: "These



powers will be used very rarely indeed but they have to be there. We didn't have to use nuclear weapons, thank God, but we needed to have them."

Murdo Fraser, Tory spokesman on land reform, said:

"The Scottish Office are simply playing old fashioned class-war politics — the lairds are an easy target."

Government officials are to put a price on any large estate

that comes on the market. If a community raises enough, it will be given the right to buy, even if a rival bidder offers twice as much.

The proposals, which will not become law until passed by the Scottish parliament, which convenes in July, include a register of land ownership, although Lord Sewel admitted that it would not be comprehensive.

Proposals to end tax breaks on estates used for deer stalking and salmon fishing were rejected by the Land Reform Committee as "needless further study", allaying the lairds' greatest fear.

The most surprising decision is that the Government will not buy land on the open market for transfer to smallholders. Originally the committee had indicated it would.

Leading article, page 17

## Modern vassals labour under the legacy of an ambitious king

By FRASER NELSON

SCOTLAND'S feudal system is the only remaining legacy of David I — an ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful 12th-century monarch.

He attempted in 1138 to invade England and claim the throne for his niece, Matilda, was aborted, but his peculiar rules of land ownership looked to govern his country into the third millennium.

The system he created grants possession of land from the sky to the centre of the earth — albeit shared with many other owners under a hierarchy of duty.

The first is God, in Scottish legal theory the head of the feudal structure and the ultimate authority from whom property rights are derived.

Second is the Crown, God's subordinate. The Queen is still the Paramount Superior of Scottish land, and all nobles are her vassals. In theory, they subordinate their property rights to her. Crown Estates owns 94,015 acres of Scotland, and Her Majesty's Government owns a further 10 per cent of the country.

Anyone under the Crown, from the laird to the crofter, is a vassal. A vassal's boss is known as his superior, and retains feudal powers over those to whom they rent or sell land. Today's highest-ranking superiors are the earls who grace society parties in Scotland and London. Their positions were created by the early Scottish kings, who gave land to chiefs of clans and their Anglo-Norman friends in order to consolidate power. In medieval Scotland, the superiors could be stripped of their land at any time, but they could also do the same to their tenants.

Superiors come in three sizes. First are the Great Landlords, who derive most of their wealth and income from businesses operating on the shores of his Outer Hebridean estate, and invoked his ancient right to tax the collection of seaweed.

family has held the land for generations and he has every interest in conserving it.

Next are the lairds, who are the target of this year's land reforms. After the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, land could be sold without permission from the superior. Scotland was, in effect, for sale and relatives of the aristocracy and businessmen from London became lairds by claiming huge chunks of the country.

During the following century, many lairds evicted entire communities to make way for sheep, taking advantage of the enormous growth in de-

mand for wool and meat in London. The enduring bitterness over the Highland clearances underpins the land debate in modern Scotland.

At the bottom of the heap lies the tenant, usually a simple smallholder or crofter who lives and works on the land. Today no superior ever asks for military aid from his vassals, but other feudal rights are still asserted from time to time. One example is, the 6th Earl Granville, the Queen's godson and laird of North Uist. He still has the power to levy royalties on any income from businesses operating on the shores of his Outer Hebridean estate, and invoked his ancient right to tax the collection of seaweed.

Superiors come in three sizes. First are the Great Landlords, who derive most of their wealth and income from businesses operating on the shores of his Outer Hebridean estate, and invoked his ancient right to tax the collection of seaweed.

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

HOME NEWS 9

# Euthanasia claims sow doubt in families' minds

Michael Horsnell and Peter Foster on fears aroused by a police inquiry into the deaths of geriatric patients

FOR ten years, Queenie Smith watched her husband slowly losing his mind. At the end of his long descent into senility, she took comfort from the knowledge that she had done everything she could for him.

She visited Ernest in a psychiatric ward at Kingsway Hospital, Derby, three times a week. On the day he died she was at her 92-year-old husband's bedside, holding his hand as he stared vacantly into space.

But whatever peace of mind she drew from her unwavering devotion was destroyed last year when sinister allegations about the Rowsley psychogeriatric ward appeared in the local press. Nurses at the hospital had claimed that patients on the ward were being allowed to die slowly from hunger and dehydration. Senior colleagues they alleged, were withdrawing food and water from patients without proper authorisation, leaving them fatally weakened and vulnerable to secondary conditions such as pneumonia.

The implication, according to one source, was that some staff on Rowsley ward were hastening patients to their deaths by placing them on "nil-by-mouth" regimes, claiming that they were at risk of choking. One source at the hospital has claimed that the re-

gime amounted to euthanasia.

The police took the allegations seriously and launched a full investigation in November 1997. For more than a year, a team of eight or nine detectives, some with experience in murder investigations, have been examining medical records and interviewing nurses, doctors and dieticians.

The death certificates of more than 40 patients who died at Kingsway Hospital between October 1993 and summer 1997 have been examined by police, and three nurses have been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.

Although all 600 staff at the hospital have been told not to speak about the investigation, it has emerged that, four months before the police inquiries began, the Southern Derbyshire Mental Health Trust had already begun an internal investigation into nursing practices on the ward. The inquiry produced a lengthy "action plan", obtained by *The Times*, which details strict procedures for dealing with pa-

## DERBY

tients suspected to be at risk of choking. According to a source close to the investigation, several nurses believed that patients were being placed on nil-by-mouth regimes too often and too early, and some resorted to smuggling in food to help ailing patients.

It is clear from the report that relations among staff broke down as disagreement over the nil-by-mouth practice spread. The introduction to the report concludes: "We hope that trusting relationships can be re-established, but we realise that this will take time." Some staff were not reassured and, according to another source, went with a list of 15 names.

A source who was among those pressing for a full police investigation said: "You would see patients who came in looking in good shape, but they would have one momentary choking fit and suddenly they were bedridden and going downhill fast. They were given nil by mouth and drips. It was a painful death, being left to dehydrate slowly."

For 79-year-old Mrs Smith, and several other widows whose husbands were on

Rowsley ward, the allegations are almost impossible to believe. All say they found the staff on the ward unfailingly attentive. Whenever she arrived on visits, Mrs Smith recalled, her husband was clean-shaven and immaculately dressed in shirt and tie. The ward itself was refurbished in the early 1990s and had a sitting room, dining area and well-appointed dormitory.

The allegations have, however, left lurking doubts in the minds of some relatives. Nancy Lovett, 81, whose husband, Sidney, a former chief of the Derbyshire Fire Service, died on the ward in February last year, has always supported the staff, but admitted: "When you are not in the [medical] profession you accept what is going on in the wards. We have been living with this for a year. It's terrible. It puts doubts into your mind."

For now, the relatives of those who died on Rowsley ward can only wait for the results of the police investigation. Having placed their trust in the nursing staff, most have only good stories to tell. But after watching their husbands, father or brothers suffer such lingering deaths, the possibility that their trust was cruelly abused is too much to bear.

Leading article, page 17



Ernest and Queenie Smith in 1987. She visited him in Kingsway three times a week

Kingsway Hospital, Derby, scene of the investigation

## While there is life there is hope, insist grieving relatives

Mary Dalley, 83, was a kindly, outgoing woman who had brought up two children and was much cherished by her grandchildren. She was admitted to Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup, southeast London, in severe pain from a duodenal ulcer caused by diuretics prescribed for osteoarthritis and by aspirin for angina, which she was later found not to have. She died a month later from what her daughter alleges, in a complaint before the General Medical Council, was deliberately induced dehydration after a misdiagnosis of brain damage. Mrs Dalley haemorrhaged so severely

## KENT

plant drew a communication manager for Queen Mary's Sidcup Trust, said: "There was a complaint received which was fully dealt with at the time and we went through a full complaints procedure."

Robert Byatt, 69, was taken to Eastbourne District General Hospital after a stroke on August 11 last year. Four days later, he was sitting up in bed, playing cards, laughing, joking, and complaining of being bored, but he had picked up a bladder infection that, according to his wife, was left untreated. With the outside temperature at 30C (86F), a ward notice stipulated that patients should receive two litres of water a day, and Mr Byatt was put on a drip. On August 18, Brenda Byatt was told that he had had a second stroke. She said: "I found him thrashing around in bed. He had septicemia and had a grand mal convulsion. Septicemia had affected his kidneys, heart, lungs and circulation. He was given drugs to calm him." Intravenous fluid was withdrawn on August 22, according to her records, and she estimates that, during his 18-day illness, he received a third of the fluids he should have had. Mr Byatt died on August 28 after a chest infection, and police are investigating his death. Kate Row, a spokeswoman for Eastbourne Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "At no time was fluid or nutrition withdrawn from Mr Byatt, or limited in any way."

## SUSSEX

Joan Kenny, 71, had a stroke after the death of her husband in 1987. She was a lively woman with a fine sense of humour and, with the help of a walking frame and carers, managed to get about. After living for 14 months at a nursing home near Stockport, she had a major stroke from which she never recovered consciousness. She died six days later, on January 16, 1996. Despite the pleas of her youngest sister, Patricia Wise, she was denied intravenous fluid during those last few days. Two days after the stroke, Mrs Wise asked the matron if her sister could be put on a drip as

she was dehydrated. She was told that might be possible, only for the doctor to say it was not. On the fourth day of her illness, according to Mrs Kenny's daughter, Lynda, her mother had tried to speak to her on 14 occasions. Mrs Wise said: "My feeling is that, even if she was terminally ill, she should have been put on a drip. It's not exactly a complicated procedure... While there is life there is hope." She complained to Stockport Health Authority, but the doctor was found not to be in breach of his terms of service. Mrs Wise just an appeal to the Health Services Appeal Authority.

## STOCKPORT

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**Freestyle gives you extra borrowing power**

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# Cook cash for war on rebels in Sierra Leone

**London backs Freetown regime with extra £1m to Nigerian-led force, writes Michael Binyon**

**BRITAIN** yesterday announced that it was giving an extra £1 million to support the Nigerian-led forces fighting rebels in Sierra Leone. The money will pay for lorries, communications and logistical back-up, but not for arms.

The Foreign Office's announcement came as Nigerian warplanes killed more than 200 rebels threatening Freetown, the capital. On Sunday Alpha jets in service with the UN peacekeeping force attacked a mountain cave hide-out near Hastings, on the outskirts of Freetown, killing at least 100 fighters from the Revolutionary United Front and their junta. Planes were also in action north of the capital as Economic troops retook control of the nearby town of Pojoko.

Britain's aid package is part of a commitment to bolster the newly Government of President Kabba, restored last year with the help of arms and peace forces provided by Sadat International, the mercenary group.

The defeated junta, which fled into the bush, is now terrorising civilians, has joined forces with the RUF and during the past two weeks has made sweeping gains, threatening the capital and the Government.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that there was no long-term arms embargo on the Sierra Leone Government, following the modification by the United Nations of an earlier blanket embargo. But Britain still operates an arms embargo on Nigeria, which provides the bulk of the Economic forces.

Given the tight Foreign Office budget, the military aid is

considerable and follows the £2 million already paid to a United Nations Trust Fund supporting Economic. The total, larger than most British humanitarian packages, reflects Britain's determination to keep in office a democratic Government that has already caused Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, considerable embarrassment over the Sandline affair. Tony Lloyd, the Foreign Office Minister responsible for Africa, said that the aid was "a demonstration of our commitment to help bring stability to Sierra Leone and promote democracy both in that country and more widely in Africa".

On Monday, Nigerian troops, backed by Sierra Leonean civilian militia, beat back a rebel attempt to enter Freetown via Hastings. The rebel force of more than 1,000 men had reached the eastern city gates, and Economic sources said many were infiltrators in civilian clothes who had slipped past Hastings.

The rebels split into two groups after the first attack, one comprising renegade soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army and the other made up of RUF fighters who have been harrying successive Gov-

ernments for more than five years.

Insurgents still control most of the north of the country, and have conscripted thousands of able-bodied men and women, training them to fight.

A systematic campaign of mutilation, hacking off the arms and legs of captured civilians, has left many villages terrorised by the rebels and unable to resist them. Those fleeing to Freetown have reported summary executions of people the rebels consider sympathetic to the Kabba Government.

A Rome-based Catholic news agency yesterday reported that one of the leaders of the ousted junta, Solomon Anthony James Mutsa, was killed in the recent fighting. He was the de facto Prime Minister of the junta, which seized power in May 1997 and was ousted last February.

The rebel forces were swiftly pushed back after President Kabba was reinstated. But they regrouped and launched a new campaign after their leader, Freddy Sankoh, was sentenced to death for treason in October. In prison in Freetown, he is appealing against the sentence.

The upsurge in fighting threatens to unleash a new wave of refugees, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Tuesday. A spokesman said that more than 100 refugees had fled into neighbouring Guinea over the past few days. But 5,800 more people in the border area of Kambia are poised to follow suit if clashes between rebels and the intervention force continue. An estimated 350,000 people are displaced within Sierra Leone.

## Law chief says police injured Anwar

FROM AGENCIE FRANCE PRESSE IN KUALA LUMPUR

**MALAYSIAN** police inflicted the injuries on Anwar Ibrahim, the former Deputy Prime Minister, that drew international condemnation after his detention, the authorities admitted yesterday.

A statement by Mohamad Abdullah, the Attorney-General, was released as Mr Anwar's corruption trial was told that semen stains on a mattress being used in evidence against him could have been planted.

Mr Mohamad said that he had found the police "fully responsible" for injuries suffered by

on his first night in custody.

Mr Anwar was in September, when the former leader was in police custody. But the person responsible had not been identified. Mr Mohamad's statement, reported by the Bernama news agency, added that medical reports indicated that he had suffered some of his injuries before he was arrested.

Mr Anwar was dismissed on September 2 and arrested 18 days later. He had a black eye when produced for his first court appearance and said he had been beaten unconscious on his first night in custody.

The President, still smarting from his visit to London last month where the media denounced him as a tyrant, also made ominous references



President Mugabe, angered by his treatment in London, is now calling for seizure of farms owned by absentee lords. "They will lose their little Englands," he said

## Mugabe wants to grab 'lands of British lords'

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

**PRESIDENT MUGABE** has promised to seize farms owned by absentee British aristocrats and says he will pay with an IOU.

Those British lords who have their little Englands and are absentee landlords will lose their little Englands, he was quoted as saying yesterday, in the state-controlled Herald newspaper. Compensation was the responsibility of the British Government, the colonisers of what was formerly Rhodesia, he said.

But Mr Mugabe, whose Government last month confiscated 841 white-owned farms in Zimbabwe, is talking about an era-long past. The big landowners, such as the Salisbury, Cranborne, and Cecil families, sold their holdings around independence in 1980 and left.

The President, still smarting from his visit to London last month where the media denounced him as a tyrant, also made ominous references

to the estimated 400 British companies in Zimbabwe. They controlled "a large portion" of the economy, and every year sent millions of pounds in profits to Britain.

British companies should give shares in their Zimbabwean businesses to black Zimbabweans, as part of the Government's plan to "indigenise" the economy, he said. Black empowerment in Zimbabwe has become synonymous with cronyism and corruption.

where the conspicuous wealth of the friends and relatives surrounding Mr Mugabe continues to swell in contrast to the widespread poverty and crumbling infrastructure that affects the rest of the country.

Mr Mugabe said Britain ought to be supporting his land reform and black empowerment programmes instead of "leading the bandwagon of criticism and malicious statements" aimed at tarnishing the country's image abroad.

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Millennium unit set up by Israel

**Jerusalem**: Israel yesterday unveiled sweeping plans for coping with so-called "messianic madness" among Christian pilgrims arriving in the Holy Land for millennium celebrations (Christopher Walker writes).

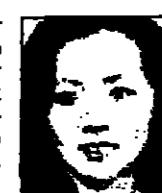
It is estimated that some 40,000 of the expected 4.5 million visitors will require psychiatric help, with 800 needing to be treated in mental hospitals. Leading agents from Shin Bet and Mossad, the Israeli domestic and foreign secret services, have been recruited into a new unit to deal with millennial cults and individuals who believe they are biblical figures.

### Cash for Stasi boss

**Berlin**: Erich Mielke, 91, once head of East Germany's secret police, has got about £1,000 (£714) compensation for his three months in jail in 1991. Herr Mielke was accused of shooting people at the Berlin Wall, but was found too ill to stand trial. He was jailed for six years in 1993 for the 1981 murder of two policemen but was freed as senile in August 1995. (AFP)

### Korean actress flees

**Seoul**: Kim Hye Young, right, a popular North Korean film star, has defected to South Korea with her family. She, her parents and two sisters arrived in August but the defection was kept secret to protect their safety. Kim Hye Young, 26, who was in the Pyongyang national theatre troupe, has starred in seven films. (AFP)



### Death row killing

**Parchman**: Donald Leroy Evans, a drifter who claimed to have killed dozens of people in 22 states, was stabbed to death by a fellow death row inmate at Mississippi State Penitentiary here. Evans, 41, sentenced for strangling a girl aged ten, won notoriety after his 1991 arrest, saying he was a serial killer, but he later said the confessions were a hoax. (AP)

### Coin smuggler held

**Budapest**: Hungarian customs officials have arrested a Bulgarian citizen trying to smuggle Ancient Greek, Roman, Thracian and Syrian coins, worth more than £37,000, to Britain. The 1,567 bronze and silver coins, dating from 3BC, were found in a bag hidden behind the car stereo of the man, who was trying to enter Austria with a false passport. (AFP)

### Bullring ban sought

**Madrid**: The Madrid regional government's top official for children's rights wants bullrings declared off-limits for those under 14, saying that youngsters can be traumatised by watching bulls bleed to death. The proposal would make the region the second in Spain to bar young children from arena bullfights. Catalonia, in the northeast, did so last month. (AP)

### Brief encounters

**Bucharest**: A wife given lacey underwear for her 35th birthday that was too small became suspicious when a woman guest at her party said she had received some that was too large. The next day a shop assistant confirmed that her husband had bought two sets of lingerie. After swapping underwear with "the other woman", she filed for divorce. (AP)

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NEW THIS SATURDAY

BART SIMPSON  
joins  
The Saturday Times

# Yemen terror imperils port deal

FROM DANIEL McGRORY IN ADEN

AMERICAN military chiefs fear the recent terrorist violence in Yemen may jeopardise their secret deal to establish an important shipping base at Aden.

The Pentagon plans to use the former British colony to bunker 600,000 barrels of marine diesel and aviation fuel which will be used to service its naval operation in the Gulf against President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

As the first US warship docked in Aden under the deal, Scotland Yard detectives and the FBI were working yes-

terday to discover who was behind the Islamic group that kidnapped 16 Western tourists and was planning to bomb five British targets in the port city.

One senior US official said:

"This eruption of Islamic terrorism in Yemen could not have come at a worse time, when we are considering hundreds of American military personnel walking around Aden on shore leave."

The priority for the ten-man FBI team sent to Yemen is to discover whether the al-Jihad group is trained and funded

by the Saudi billionaire, Osama bin Laden, accused by Washington of various terrorist outrages.

FBI sources say they are certain that bin Laden has bases in mountainous southern Yemen where his terrorists fled after being forced out of Sudan and Afghanistan in the past

seven months.

It has also been disclosed that US intelligence agents were warned six weeks ago that Hamas was planning to shift its headquarters from Khartoum to Yemen. A week later an armed gang shot an American aid worker in an ambush outside his home which

is near where the kidnappers of the group took place. One of the gunmen who escaped after wounding Rich Bonney is said to have also taken part in last week's shootout in the desert in which four hostages, including three Britons, were killed.

The Pentagon's ambitions for Aden will depend on the

FBI's findings, although naval chiefs did decide to go ahead with plans for the frigate, USS *Klakring*, to dock off Aden's Prince of Wales pier, built by the British in 1919. None of the crew was allowed off the frigate which was returning from the Gulf. As she docked amid strict security, an Iranian tanker passed close by.

Until the British left in 1967, Aden was the world's second busiest port. It was a coaling station for ships sailing to India and the Far East and its natural deep waters can berth the biggest aircraft carriers.

The US Navy needs the port because it is closing its operation at Djibouti and the Pentagon is worried about the future use of bases in Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia. The fuel bunker is being constructed by British technicians next to the terminal for the new Aden freeport that will open in March. The US base

should have been operating by now, but the first fuel is not due in the tanks until next month.

The Americans also want to refurbish a nearby refinery so that it can produce the quality of marine diesel and aviation fuel they need to store.

American sources said that they will review plans to allow sailors and airmen shore leave during daylight; the decision will upset local traders and bar owners who had expected business not seen since the British occupation.

American security officials, conscious of the security threat in the region, wanted to train units of Yemeni troops in hostage rescue, but were forbidden to do so by American diplomats concerned about the

anti-terror squad together with a British consul, David Pearce, held discussions with Tahar Abou Ghannem, the Governor of Aden. The focus of the investigation will be

question Abu Hassan, a jailed kidnapper, and the terrorist arrested in Aden using fake British passports.

They were said to be about to launch bomb attacks on targets, including the British consulate and the Anglican church. They said that the investigation will take time as urged, the authorities not

proceded with its plans to convict and execute Hassan.

Victor Henderson, the British Ambassador, met Houssein Mohammed Arab, the Yemeni Interior Minister, yesterday about the investigation. Henderson denied reports that British ministers had said that they will block Yemen's application to join the Commonwealth because of its handling of the kidnap incident.



Aden port where the US Navy has organised a refuelling base, an arrangement thrown into doubt by the recent hostage-taking incident

PETER NICHOL



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SEE THE BACK PAGE OF SECTION ONE FOR TODAY'S TOKEN

CHANGING TIMES

## Iran group renews threat to Rushdie

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

SALMAN Rushdie's life is under received threat from a shadowy, well-organised Iranian extremist group that has claimed responsibility for the recent murders of four dissidents and an attack on American tourists, a moderate Iranian newspaper said yesterday.

Zan, a usually well informed woman's daily, said that the little-known Fedayeen (Devotees) of Pure Mohammad Islam was "preparing to put into effect the historic fatwa" of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, who condemned the author to death in 1989 for alleged blasphemy in his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

The group released a statement saying that it is using "all means at its disposal to the application of the fatwa", Zan said. It added that the group had repeated an earlier claim that it had killed two secular writers and Danush Forouhar, the national leader, and his wife, Parvez Eskandari. The group structure is said to include judicial section run by the judges, Zan added.

While any threat to Mr Rushdie will be taken seriously, too little is known about the group to gauge the level of danger. "To what extent it is real or invented simply cause problems for Iran's international relations is unclear," an Iranian analyst said. "Assuming it does exist and did carry out the murder here, there is no way of knowing whether it has the capacity to act abroad."



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# Do you have to have big breasts to work here?

Saturday morning. Hunched over *The New York Times*, Peter lets out a sudden groan. "Tragic news," he cries. "The Manhattan Hooters is going bankrupt. We must go there before it closes."

In fact he has been trying to organise a trip to Hooters since it opened, here on 50th Street, just off Broadway, a year ago. I have not been enthusiastic. With 222 restaurants across the country, Hooters is the 20th largest restaurant chain in America; however, the attraction is more than its food. Like most other chains, it serves the standard fare of burgers, chicken wings and chef salads suffocated with blue-cheese dressing. But Hooters offers an extra delicacy: a *flotilla* of friendly waitresses, famous for their generous breasts, cantered by push-up bras into skimpy crop-tops accompanied by equally skimpy orange shorts.

"I'd better get a group together while we can still go," says Peter briskly, reaching for the phone. "Michael? Did you see that Hooters has filed for chapter 11 protection from creditors? We're thinking of...

"Absolutely!" interrupts Michael. "Count me in."

"Hooters? That's my Dad's favourite restaurant," says Dana, laughing. "Can I bring him, too?"

I call to make a reservation on the free-phone number. "Burger and fries, burger and fries..." says the message imitating a stock record. "Tired of the same old menu? Come to Hooters and enjoy our gourmet hotdogs. You can add mushrooms?" Then the receptionist answers.

"Hello, Hooters."

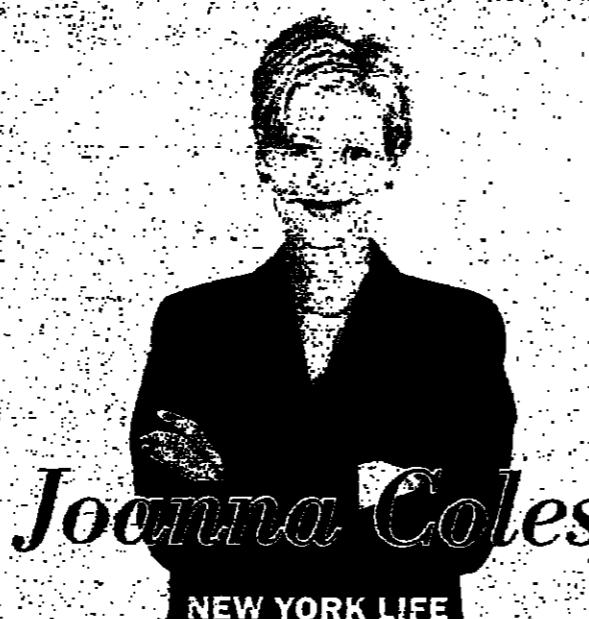
"Can I make a reservation for tonight?" I ask.

"You want to make a reservation?" This in itself is our first warning. In a town where you can wait weeks for a booking, and *Le Cirque*, five minutes walk away on Madison, claims to receive 5,000 calls a day from diners begging for a table, the girl from Hooters sounds incredulous.

"Yes, for six people."

"Er, OK then, but there's really no need..."

Saturday night. From the outside, Hooters, perched on the second floor above a 24-hour parking garage, is not easy to



spot. Its entrance is up some steps leading to a concrete courtyard, where the owner later dolefully admits he was recently mugged. The six of us arrive promptly at 6pm but are soon to be disappointed.

"Where are the hooters?" exclaims Peter, as a waitress

sails past in a shapeless white tracksuit and Ross, the manager, shows us to a high, round table whose centrepiece is a fixed roll of paper towel. Dana's father, a veteran of several Hooters bars in Virginia, looks confused.

"The interior is kind of the same but one of the girls from my local Hooters, at Newport News, went on to be a *Playboy* centrefold," he says.

"I'd better get a group together while we can still go," says Peter briskly, reaching for the phone. "Michael? Did you see that Hooters has filed for chapter 11 protection from creditors? We're thinking of...

don't think anyone here's gonna do that."

Another fully tracksuited girl goes past and, noting our chagrin, Ross apologises. "We are having a little heating problem..." Outside it is a perishing 15F and one of the coldest days I can remember.

Though the interior is the regulation sauna-style orange pine, reminiscent of a ski chalet, it is distinctly cool.

"Hi, I'm Anna. Welcome to Hooters. I'm your waitress for this evening," says Anna, hopping up to one of the high stools and settling in as if to join us for the evening. This is another of Hooters' unique selling points which goes down so well west of the Hudson. While they take orders, the waitresses are required to join your table and chat.

Though slight, Anna's cleavage is bravely on display, peeping from the top of her crop-top. As we look around, it becomes clear that she is the only one sporting enough to expose any part of her body at all. The other girls are sticking to their sweats, their only concession to Hooters being the red flashing badges they wear on each nipple. The wall above us is decorated with imitation road signs: "Caution: blondes thinking!" Next to it is another one: "Warning: high levels of hydrogen peroxide in the air." And another, featuring twin humps, warns simply: "Bumps."

On the neighbouring table

a large man has just inserted long ribbed stems of celery up each nostril and is nodding his head, barking like a dog, with a walrus to cheers from his companions. Anna hands us each a paper plate and an anti-septic wipe.

Hooters — delightfully tacky yet unretined, boasts the menu, recalling the original dilemma faced in 1983 by the start-up team of what to name yet another restaurant chain. "Simple, what else brings a gleam to men's eyes everywhere besides beer and chicken wings and an occasional winning football season? Hooters — it is supposed they were into *owl's*!"

"Yeah, that owl thing confused people a bit," says Dana's father. "At the grand opening in Newport News, grandmothers took children along thinking it was a nature restaurant."

We order two Sample Plates — "a little bit of everything. Trust us, we never lie."

Around us the restaurant erupts as 50 television screens show the Arizona Cardinals scoring against the Dallas Cowboys. In his excitement, the man on the neighbouring table has removed the celery stick from his right nostril and is chewing it.

At a time when New York's Mayor is closing down the city's sex clubs, Hooters' girls are more *Baywatch* than Sally Bowles. The atmosphere is saucy postcard not serious sex, and in one corner two young children are cheerfully tucking into a pile of battered buffalo wings, accompanied by their parents.

So why hasn't it caught on here, I ask Richard Yudenberg, the owner of the franchise, sitting gloomily at the bar. Given that it now has two extremely successful S&M restaurants, is Manhattan too sophisticated? Its taste in sex too dark for this whole-some Midwestern version?

"No, no. The problem is that the landlord's not giving me enough signage exposure," he grumbles, flicking his tiny ponytail. "No one can find us."

"Do you have to have big breasts to work here?" I inquire.

"No," he insists. "Just the right personality." Hanging from the ceiling above him, a promotional inflated Budweiser sofa is leaking air with a soft hiss.

"Whenever I go to a different city I always look for the Hooters," says Roberto Rosado, a broker, roosting at the bar in a black woolly cap and alpine sweater. "I came by for a beer once, wanted to be alone, but I loved the staff. I like the Miami Beach Hooters. It's just like this — only 60 degrees warmer."

As we get up to leave, Yudenberg calls after us. "Come back at the end of next week — we should have auditory hearing on by then."

IMAGE BANK

# How to silence the body when it cries out for a doughnut

## SLIM FOREVER

In the final extract from his book, Dr Robert C. Atkins says nuts or cream cheese may stop the cravings that threaten to break your diet



Beware the binge: if your body screams out for a particular food, you have activated an addiction. It is metabolic — and you must tough it out

The Atkins programme is not just about losing weight; it helps you to keep excess pounds off for ever by adding some of your most desired foods to the basic diet you lost weight on. It also recognises the fact that sometimes it is just impossible to resist a craving or the desire to binge — and shows you how to break the diet and survive.

If you do succumb to that craving and go back to sugar, bread or fruit, you suddenly discover that you must have these foods and that no day or meal feels right without them. If this should happen, you will notice that the need which develops is genuinely physical. It isn't simply that a doughnut tastes good and that you'd like to have it. No, your body roars with anxiety and passion for that doughnut. And then you know — you have activated an addiction, just like an alcoholic is with his bottle.

This isn't shameful. It's physical, it's chemical, it's met-

abolic — and that's precisely why you must avoid it. Most of you already know that for a significant portion of your life carbohydrates have been stronger than you. But even now you must never ignore a craving; it may pass but it is likely to reappear momentarily when your resolve is weak. And then you break the diet.

Since craving is part of addiction, that could trigger a cycle of addictive eating behaviour. Your craving appeared, most likely, in a relatively fast state; it was triggered by a fall in blood glucose and your body perceived a need to put a brake on the falling glucose level and gave a signal that sweets were needed.

Change your physiology from a fasting to a fed state by eating something in Atkins diet language, food, rich food, and plenty of it — but of course, fat and protein food with very little or no carbohydrate. This will stabilise your blood glucose and all the other constituents that give rise to

the craving signal. The best foods to beat a craving are macadamia nuts, the dieter's best friend. Other nut choices are walnuts, pecans or brazils. Others are cream cheese or rich dessert cheese.

You can also do this with something sweet — artificially so — and with whipping cream. Put three or four tablespoons of whipping cream into a glass and top it with a diet soft drink, or you may opt for diet gelatin dessert with whipping cream. Or try fried pork rinds which sound terribly fatty but, in fact, contain nearly none. Virtually nothing has been rendered off.

Similarly, if you binge, it is better to binge on protein/fat foods. Not because you can't gain a pound or two if you put away too many thick steaks, but because protein foods are fundamentally self-limiting.

Everyone has eaten 30 biscuits in one sitting at some time, but how many people have eaten ten-hard-boiled eggs at one sitting? People just don't do it. A typical person of average metabolic resistance may find he must stay on between 40 and 60 grams of carbohydrate daily. Eating more than 40 grams prevents him from losing more pounds and becoming too thin; eating less than 60 prevents weight gain.

Once you are on the maintenance diet you can eat most vegetables, nuts and berries. You can cautiously reintroduce the vegetables containing more than 10 per cent carbohydrate, as well as whole grains such as oats, barley, millet or buckwheat. You may even be able to handle an occasional potato and a fruit a day. You can begin to use recipes containing some carbohydrates.

**B**ut the last choice for you, the truly hazardous indulgence, is sweets. Frankly, you should restrict your consumption of sweets made with real sugars to the occasional slice of birthday cake. Make your own sweets with artificial sweeteners. And remember to be endlessly wary of sugar and corn syrup, white flour and corn starch. Look at labels on packaged foods and avoid like the plague those that contain sugar, corn syrup, honey, maltose, dextrose, fructose, lactose, sorbitol and other variations. Use caffeine and alcohol in moderation.

And if you find yourself gaining weight, don't put off dealing with it — go straight back to the induction phase of the diet. Never allow yourself to be more than a two-week diet away from that goal weight. Do not go back to your maintenance diet without first losing all you have regained. It is simple. A salad a day of carbohydrate and you have slashed your weight back to perfect in as little as six to eight days, or two to three weeks if you have high metabolic resistance.

• Extracted from Dr Atkins' New Diet Revolution, published by Vermilion at £6.99. Times readers can order it, free of postage/packaging, by calling: The Times Bookshop, 0990 134459. Copyright Dr Robert C. Atkins 1999.



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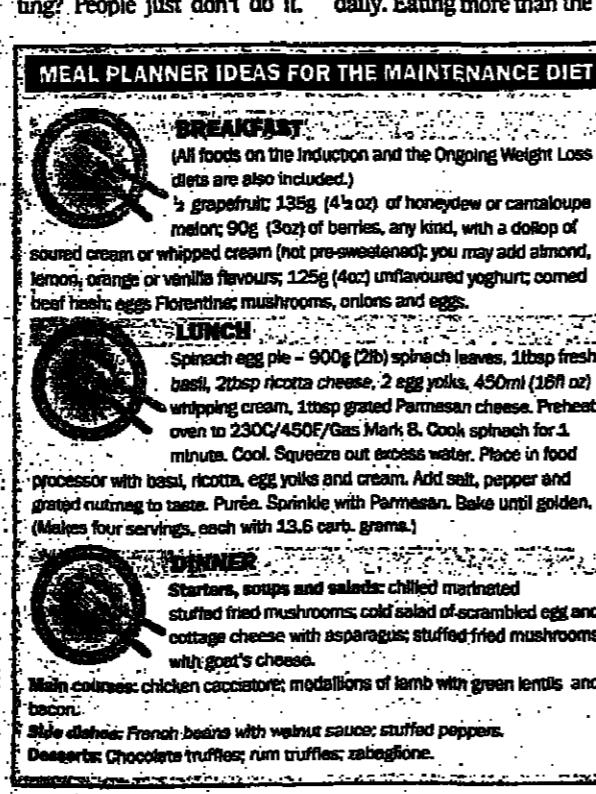
ALL my patients receive a fairly significant amount of vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids and other nutritional agents. I prescribe them because I have learnt that nutrients can have an impact on anyone's health.

I have found many nutrients to be valuable, conferring health advantages even on healthy people, so I no longer consider that a person following a theoretically optimal — even perfect — diet could live as long or as healthily as he could were he to take nutritional supplements. I mean, I have developed a dieter's form of supplements. It includes:

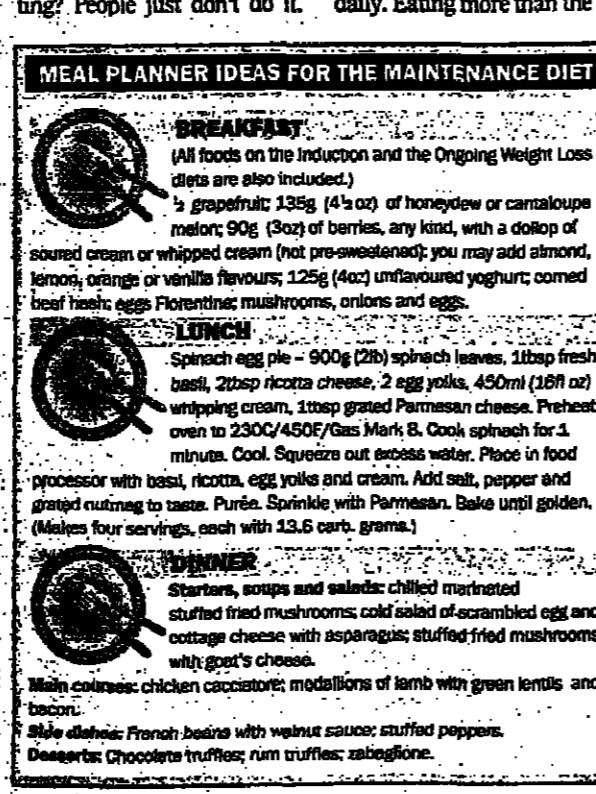
Vitamin A 200 IU; Beta-Carotene 500 IU; Vitamin D2 150; Thiamine 20mg; Niacin (B3) 25mg; Nicotinamide 5mg; Panthothenic Acid 25mg; Calcium Panthothenate (B5) 25mg; Pyridoxine 5mg; Pyridoxine (B6) 20mg; Folic Acid 100mcg; B1-Phosphate 2mg; Cyanocobalamin (B12) 30mcg; Vitamin E 20 IU; Copper 75mcg; Zinc (Chelate) 10mg; Citrus Bioflavonoids 150mg; Chromium (Picolinate) 50mcg; Molybdenum (Sodium) 10mcg; Vanadyl Sulfate 15mcg; Selenium 40mcg; Octacosanol 150mcg; N-Acetyl-L-cysteine 20mcg; and L-Glutathione (reduced) 5mg — all in a base of lactobacillus bulgaricus and bifidus acidophilus, 8g Complex and growth factors.

The suggested dosage is one to three tablets three times a day, after meals.

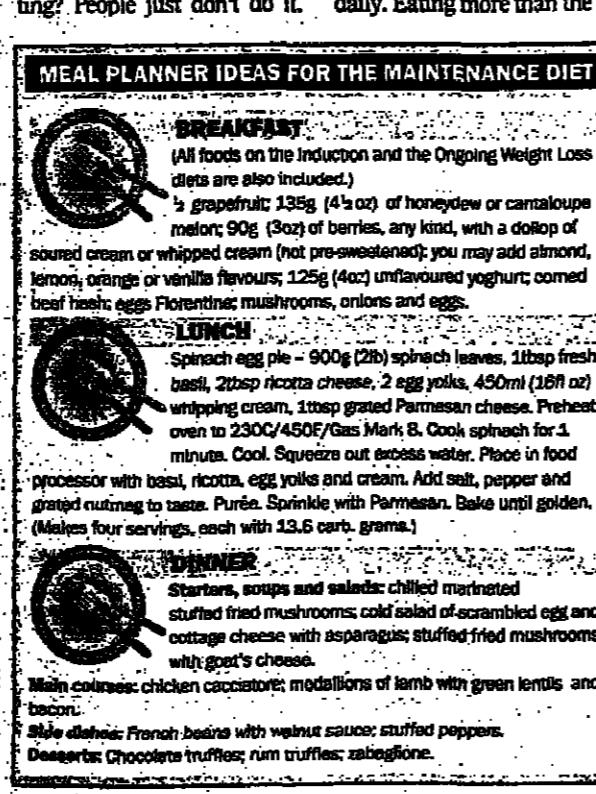
• Catherine Collins, chief dietitian at St George's Hospital, London, points out that this diet is not suitable for diabetics. Anyone starting a diet should first consult their doctor.



MEAL PLANNER IDEAS FOR THE MAINTENANCE DIET



MEAL PLANNER IDEAS FOR THE MAINTENANCE DIET



MEAL PLANNER IDEAS FOR THE MAINTENANCE DIET

# Too sugary, even for the States

Bronwen Maddox asks if America is ready for Mrs President

The most boring politician in America could have upstaged the impending Senate trial of Bill Clinton. That drama is lacking in direction, momentum or menace. As it happens, a couple of the dreariest had a good shot. The arch-conservative Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, in announcing that he might run for the Republican nomination for President in 2000, and Senator John Ashcroft, figurehead of the Religious Right, in hinting that he probably would not, glimmered in the limelight. Neither signal has real import, other than to show how much attention has already turned to the next presidency, regardless of President Clinton's fate.

But it was Elizabeth Dole who deservedly grabbed this week's headlines. Her announcement that she was stepping down as President of the Red Cross to consider "exciting possibilities" was read, as intended, as a sign that she might run for the presidential nomination. Can Bob Dole's wife, who threw herself so prominently into his unsuccessful 1986 bid for the White House, succeed where her husband failed? Will America have its first female President?

For all the delighted speculation, the answer is almost certainly no. The barrier is not the national reluctance to elect a woman as its head. For sure, that exists, but is shrinking, and no longer seems insurmountable. The greater problem, in Mrs Dole's case, is that she is second-rate. If Elizabeth Hanford Dole, 62, ran for the Republican presidential nomination, she would be only the second woman to do so. The first, Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, in 1964, won only 22,000 primary votes.

But it is not just novelty which has generated the buzz around Mrs Dole this week. Repeated polls of Republican voters put her second only to George W. Bush, son of the former President, as the most popular candidate. A Harvard-educated lawyer from North Carolina, she can claim to know Washington from the inside; she worked in non-elected positions in six Administrations, including Deputy Assistant for Consumer Affairs for President Nixon, Secretary of Transportation under President Reagan and Secretary of Labour under President Bush.

She won rave reviews for her speech at the 1996 Republican National Convention, and won more airtime in championing her husband in his 1996 campaign. She is thought easily capable of raising the \$25 million or so needed for the primary election campaign. A born-again Christian, she has a stronger appeal to the Religious Right than George W. Bush.

She can offer her party its long-sought solution to the "gender gap" — women's relative antipathy to Republicanism. Not least, and with more subtle appeal than the Clintons' 1992 slogan of "two for

The real problem is, she is untried and second-rate

which has prompted one conservative commentator to note: "A warning should be passed out to diabetics — after ten minutes, they'll suffer from sugar shock."

So while she is often compared with Hillary Clinton, the First Lady is in a different league. True, there are similarities: both are Methodists, were raised in comfortable middle-class surroundings, and trained as lawyers. But there is a chasm between the diffidence and evasiveness of the 1950s-style Southern belle, and the purposefulness of Hillary's Chicago-honed, 1960s passions.

Mrs Dole's siltiness should not, however, lead observers to exaggerate the barriers to a woman becoming President. The conservatism of many Americans about women's role, despite the vigour of the feminist movement, remains one of the country's paradoxes. But as the polls have shown this week, voters' feelings are changing. Many seem now to feel they could live with a female President, particularly a Republican, who would not seem as offputtingly radical as a Democrat.

It would be a shame if Mrs Dole's near-certain failure to win the party's nomination led observers — or future candidates — to overestimate the barriers to women. She could, perhaps more plausibly, aim to become America's first female Vice-President. As running-mate to George W. Bush, she would bring balance to the Texan's ticket.

comment@the-times.co.uk

the price of one", she offers the reassuring backdrop of her widely liked husband.

But Mrs Dole's shortcomings are also glaring. She has never before sought elective office, nor been forced to spell out her policies in detail. Nor are those policies clear, beyond her opposition to abortion. Originally a Democrat, she became an Independent during the Nixon Administration and converted to Republicanism on marrying Bob Dole. A campaign would also reopen scrutiny of her past financial dealings, particularly gains she is said to have made in the 1980s from having her personal finances handled by an adviser who had close knowledge of legislation her husband was helping to craft.

But above all, you could not call her a natural politician.

Known for conscientious over-preparation, there is something of the Harriet Harman about her. As *Time* magazine put it: "Elizabeth never gets a word or pause or chuckle out of place, but she can no more ad lib than levitate." Even when cast in the role of top executive, she plays it as head

girl: she once greeted employees in the parking lot with a Stop sign so that she could check their seatbelts.

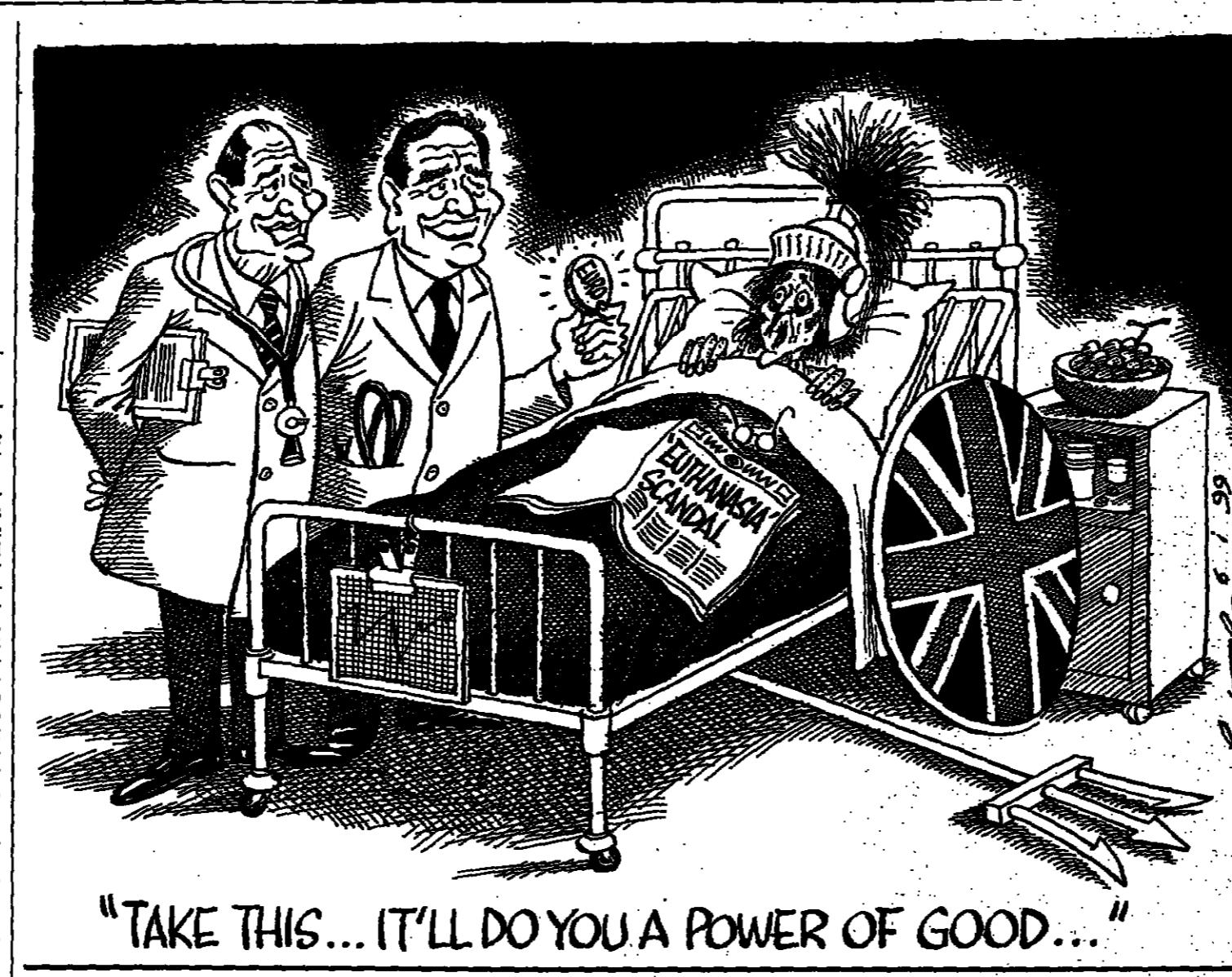
The message she sends is curiously ten parts Southern girliness, with a doll-like fringe, to one part steely executive. She has fashioned a saccharine style, helped by her honeyed accent, which has prompted one conservative commentator to note: "A warning should be passed out to diabetics — after ten minutes, they'll suffer from sugar shock."

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## Herrs to the revolution

Perry Anderson on the former student radicals who will rule in Berlin

His will be Berlin's year. A new German Government is moving to an old German capital. But what sort of Government, and what sort of city?

Conventional wisdom compares Gerhard Schröder with Tony Blair. One genuine point in common is that both were picked as candidates by the media before they were chosen by their party. The comparison to Blair, in Schröder's case, was part of the anointing process itself. They share telegraphic looks and a rhetoric of modernisation. But in some ways the parallels are misleading. With his private schooling, his stint at Oxford, and his lucrative practice at the Bar, Blair is a typical product of a privileged background.

Schröder, whose father was killed

on the Russian Front, comes from the debris of postwar German society. His mother was a charwoman: his first job was in an ironmonger's shop; his degree was eventually obtained at night school. He became a leader of the *Jusos*, the SPD's youth organisation in the early Seventies, when it was well to the left of the party, and took active part in mass demonstrations. The aura of moderate pragmatism is quite recent. But there is no lack of charm: sturdy good looks, attractive thick voice, mischievous smile. Blair appears an over-eager adolescent by comparison.

The larger difference, however, is institutional. The SPD is not in thrall to its leader. It is a very different party from new Labour. Twice the size with 700,000 members, it has a culture noticeably more working class. The atmosphere of an SPD rally is closer to Labour meetings of the Sixties or Seventies than to anything in Britain today. Trade unions in Germany weathered the Eighties better, and enjoy stronger relations with the party. A still more important difference between the two organisations lies in the regional distribution of power in the SPD.

Germany's federal structure means that political careers are made first and foremost in the *Länder*. Schröder, catapulted within six months of winning a provincial election in Hanover to leadership of the country, is entitled to his party's gratitude. But he has no deep-rooted following within it. Indeed, he was widely distrusted, the party's attitude recalling the view expressed by Claud Cockburn that "charm and dependency so rarely go together".

The members' favourite remains Oskar Lafontaine, whose skill, charisma and discipline galvanised the SPD machine in the years of Helmut Kohl's decline. Lafontaine was another postwar orphan from a poor family, educated by Jesuits in the Saar, who became the brightest of his generation of SPD politicians.

He is intellectually better prepared than Schröder, with more decided views. As Minister of Finance, and SPD chairman, his position is unusually strong. Lafontaine is the first Western politician of aggressively Keynesian outlook in 25 years. He

has already seen off Schröder's attempt to install a wan version of Richard Branson as Economics Minister and shaken the Bundesbank. The direction of the Government, of course, will not be set by the SPD alone. The rules of any German coalition give significant leverage to the lesser partner. The Greens are likely to pull the Government in less conventional directions than social democracy, left to its own devices, would do.

The figure of Joschka Fischer, the Green Foreign Minister, indicates why this should be so. Son of another victim of the war, a labourer expelled from Bohemia in 1946, he is a survivor of the student radicalism of the Sixties. In those years, he led one of the most daring "spontaneist" groups in Frankfurt. With others, he took a job on the assembly line in an Opel factory to rouse the working class to revolt. When management flushed them out, Fischer turned to the squatters' movement in Frankfurt, organising a mobile strike force, the *Putztruppe*, to block police action against housing occupations, matching violence with violence where need be.

Eventually a demonstration against the death of Ulrike Meinhof in 1976 got out of hand and a policeman was nearly killed. Fischer was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, but released for lack of evidence. Changing his mind about

the legitimacy of civil violence, he spent some years driving a cab and dabbling in philosophy, then joined the Greens and quickly rose to the top as their most flexible and articulate leader.

Fischer's career can be seen in innumerable ways emblematic. He is the first chemically pure product of 1968 to become a front-rank politician in Western Europe. The revolt of that year left deeper and more durable traces in German society than anywhere else. The mass movements were more spectacular in France and Italy, but they did not have the same cultural staying-power.

Three features set the German upheaval apart. Morally, the awakening of '68 was also a first attempt to settle accounts with the national past, as a generation started to discover and confront the record of its parents in the Nazi era. Intellectually, the revolt drew on a much richer complex of indigenous ideas than its counterparts elsewhere. The students who triggered the movement read Marx with the ease and lack of distance that we associate with reading Smith or Mill. Moreover, the radical Frankfurt School occupied a unique position within the generally conservative culture of the Federal Republic. There was no body of social and philosophical work remotely rivaling its influence.

Finally, there was a strain in the national culture at large that relayed the momentum of the late Sixties and early Seventies into the Green movement a decade later. This was, of course, the long tradition of German Romanticism, interpreted broadly, from Werther to Wenders, the most enduring strand in the sensibility of the country's intelligentsia.

In a great variety of different registers, two motifs remained constant: an acute sense of the mystery of the natural world, and of the high calling of youth. The Greens are the populist heirs to this tradition. The revolutionary ferment of '68, however

Utopian, was on such a scale that when it ebbed, it left behind a rich land of counter-cultural enclaves in West Germany. Here the environmental concerns of the Eighties found a natural habitat. Germany is the one country where the question of what has ultimately become of the experience of '68 will be put to a direct test.

The reinstating of Berlin as the capital next year will, if anything, only underline this progressive turn to the Left.

No European city has accrued so many misleading legends as Berlin. To resist them is easier, however, than to capture the elusive realities now taking shape behind them. Most people associate Berlin with Prussian military tradition, Bismarck's autocracy, Nazi violence and megalomania. In fact, Frederick II preferred his complex in Potsdam, Bismarck disliked Berlin so much that, after unification, he wanted to make Kassel the capital of the country. No prominent Nazi came from Berlin.

Berlin was not a natural setting for reaction. In 1848 it saw the hardest fighting at the barricades of any city in Germany. By the turn of the century, it was the most industrialised capital in Europe, with a working-class population to match. It let the November Revolution and was the scene of the Spartacist Rising. In the Weimar period, it was a left-wing stronghold.

The Third Reich and the Cold War cut off these traditions. After Hitler's fall, the division of Berlin masked the question of what, if any, underlying continuities might have survived. The 1998 elections offer a startling answer. The Left won every single district.

The map of the city is just one colour, in two shades: bright Social Democratic red in the west and southeast, deep Post-Communist red in the centre and northeast.

Compare Paris, a permanent fief of the Right. Rome, where Finn's ex-Passionists are the largest party, or even London, where Ken Livingstone will never sweep Westminster or Kensington. Bismarck's nightmare has come true. Berlin is going to be the most enduring strand in the sensibility of the planet, you know.

Don't walk around, glutted every year with new celebrities — we still have Barbara Windsor, Jim Dale and Joan Sims. Apart from Steve McQueen and Yul Brynner, we still have most of the Magnificent Seven. Well, I can't seem to track down Brad Dexter, as such. But that is probably a good sign.

And there is philosophy in all of it. It may be a fortnight late for Christian consolations, but ask yourself is Frank Sinatra really any less alive than Bob Hope? We have come full circle in this age of celebrity, and arrived back at a point where we should be able to accept that death really is only a shuffling off of the mortal coil, for off of earth cannot dent record sales, or prevent the television repeats of MGM musicals.

The dead will always have their moment. It is the living who need our attention. I look forward to a time when Peter Sissons will introduce the last item on the news by lowering his voice a little, looking very seriously at the camera, and saying: "Finally, Mike Yarwood, the comedian whose impression of Harold Wilson made him a household name in the 1970s, and who for many represents the last of a forgotten breed in British television, was still alive yesterday at his home in Surrey. He is not even ill. He was not on stage at the time. The world of light entertainment is not in mourning. Mr Yarwood is 52."

Alan Coven is away.

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# Oh my lord

AMONG the more startling disclosures expected in the forthcoming biography of Peter Mandelson, *Mandy*, is that the former minister calls his mother "Duchess". He shares this peculiar practice, I gather, with his fellow bachelor, the disc spinner Sir Jimmy Savile (pictured right), as well as those princes of darkness, the Krays. Social commentators and psychologists are pondering why he cannot make do with "Mary". The former Labour MP and psycho-babbler Leo Abse believes it tells us rather a lot about Wendy's ambition.

"Duchesses have sons who are earls and counts," he says. "No doubt it reinforces his delusions of grandeur. Another indication is that he idolises his mother and is bound to her to such an excessive extent that he can't be bound to other women." Lord Hattersley, like Savile, from South Yorkshire, says it is an unusual name even for foppish fanciers. "I've never heard anyone use it where I come from. If I called my mother that, she would think I had gone crackers. It is more Cockney than Yorkshire, and used by people who have an unnatural interest in duchesses."

Anthony Clare, the radio quack, suggests it reflects the aspirations of Wendy as much as Mary — "a powerful figure in his life, although his house could easily be the home of a duchess". Sean Aitchison, a Professor of Language at Oxford, suspects



Victoria: "Try sparrowhawks. Ma'am?" Perhaps Lord Falconer Thornton should do likewise.

### Toff nosing

SEND for the toffs: the latest cry of William Hague after he axed Viscount Cranborne. After his flirtation with the Church, the Tory leader has trained his field-glasses on the green welly tendency. "I could not help noticing that when the Green movement was at its most vociferous at the end of the 1980s," he will say in a forthcoming paper, "we had Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, which were run by an Old Etonian hereditary peer and an Old Etonian baronet respectively. That was in stark contrast to the Conservative Party."

It will take a lot more than these

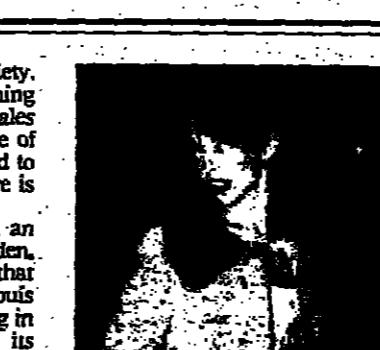
pronouncements, I fear, to make Rotherham Man smart.

• **BILLY ZANE**, the pantomime baddie, has been cast as the director's eye. On a visit to the Chelsea Cinema, he stormed out, yelling that the screen was blurred. Staff found that the film was out of focus — a detail the one-eyed projectionist had failed to spot.

### Opening time

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S haunt has been chilled by a blast of feminism. The ghost of Walter Scott, who was buried in a lead-lined sarcophagus in a crypt under the castle, has been disturbed by a woman who has been staying in the castle. The woman, who is a member of the local women's group, has been told that the castle is haunted by the ghost of Sir Walter Scott. She has been told to leave the castle immediately. She has been told to leave the castle immediately.

"My grandfather says he once saw an absentee landlord."



### Narky Parky

THE man who put the chit into chat, Michael Parkinson, is scatting about the new breed of decorative television hosts. Melvin

JASPER GERARD

These we have missed  
Let's celebrate our living legends,  
says Giles Coren

T he loss of not one but two singing cowboys in 1998 was dismissed by most of us as one of death's little ironies. The Grim Reaper seemed to be struggling — very much against the grain of his specific remit — to bring off something rather witty with a couple of finely chosen sweeps of his scythe. Something, at any rate, worthy of a Wilder aphorism.

Once the laughter had died down, however, and it came time, on new year's morning, to leaf through the colour mags' annual double-page offerings of the past 12 months' most significant croaks, it was not so much the fact that Gene Autry and Roy Rogers were no longer with us that seemed difficult to grasp, as the fact that, until so very recently, they had actually been walking about exchanging pleasantries with the neighbours, burning their tongues on too-hot coffee and banging their toes on doors and bed legs.

I was hurled back instantaneously to the Christmas of 1994, when, grazing through that year's grim selection of inch-square celebrity grins (they wouldn't have been smiling if they'd known), I was moved to call out to my girlfriend: in the bathroom? Did you know that Eugene Ionesco had died?

A disbelieving head popped round the door, and she gurgled through lips that frothed, with toothpaste I assumed, rather than with indignation at the loss inflicted upon France's tradition of Absurdist theatre.

"Ionesco was alive?" I felt similarly this year about Maureen O'Sullivan, Martha Gellhorn, and Ferdinand Porsche, and last year, almost cripplingly, about Laurie Lee. What a waste that they should have been alive, and we didn't know.

Still sweating a little at the near-viability of those two stetsoned crooners, I flew to my laptop, computer and telephone. If they had been alive, then so, too, might others have been. Was it possible, for example, that the greatest cowboy of them all rode on? There, at [www.loneranger.com](http://www.loneranger.com), was confirmation: "Clayton Moore will be 85 in September." I ran round the house singing Rossini's most famous overture until it hurt (Rossini is dead, by the way).

1999 had begun as well as I could have dreamt. This is what the supplements should be giving us — not lists of those who are dead, but those who struggle on.

Let us not weep at the passing of Alice Faye, but celebrate the continued good health of 91-year-old



## CREATURES OF EUROLAND

Serpents lurk in the lush euro-pastures extolled by politicians

In Europe's financial centres this week, the euro has made a suave entry. That by no means assures future success. On the streets, euro-11 citizens are being exhorted by jubilant politicians and glossy brochures to revel in a "new era for Europe". So far, so painless; and so abstract. Since consumers will go on using their national coinage until 2002, the momentous irreversibility of what has just occurred has yet to sink in. So has the realisation that the advent of what is still a virtual currency cannot guarantee more jobs, a surge in growth or greater unity of political purpose among euroland's 11 members.

On the contrary, as is clear from our recent series on euroland's fault-lines, the euro's chief potential advantage, the transparency it will bring to commerce and to relative economic performance, will throw into sharp relief a host of tensions – between the EU's North and South, town and country, old and young, dynamic zones and the Belgian or French rustbelts, between Dutch high technology and no-hope lands in east Germany and Italy's south, between the sluggish core and the overheating Irish or Spanish "periphery".

This is far from being an optimal currency zone with compatible characteristics and needs. Despite strenuous efforts to close the gaps on public debt, deficits and inflation – efforts that will be politically hard to sustain now that victory has so resoundingly and prematurely been declared – huge disparities remain between and within countries. Farming, industry and services have very different weights in national GDPs. Unemployment is nil in Luxembourg and 19 per cent in Spain, where wages are half those in Germany.

Yet a single exchange rate and monetary policy must now fit all; and when only Finland and Luxembourg have public debt ratios below Maastricht's 60 per cent threshold, and Belgium's and Italy's are more than double, there is little fiscal leeway. So flexible labour markets will have to compensate for lost autonomy. Yet few governments are prepared to take the political heat of rapid deregulation. The euro could, as its fans claim, make the EU more competitive; but that would risk social unrest which, in France and east Germany, could turn violent. If pan-European producers migrated to low-cost areas,

for example, this could in theory drag down labour costs at the core. In practice, France and Germany would demand tax, social security and wage harmonisation to combat "social dumping". For the Mezzogiorno, that would be the kiss of death.

Euroland's publics are ill-prepared, because ill-informed, for trouble ahead. Leaders bent on an elitist project, which has throughout ruthlessly disdained the need for democratic assent, have attacked sceptics as unpatriotic, while presenting the euro as a panacea, for every European ill. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, even asserts that the euro will make the EU the world's fastest growing region this year – a rash boast when Italy has downgraded its estimates to 1.8 per cent, and German growth could slow to a miserable 1.4 per cent. As for France's boast that the euro will mark "a new age in job creation", IMF simulations indicate that even if eurozone governments free up labour markets far more aggressively than most intend, by 2010 the euro will have cut job queues by just 2 per cent. Without such flexibility, it expects unemployment to rise by then by 2 per cent.

The consequences could be explosive. That is why politicians, desperate for faster growth, are already on collision course against the European Central Bank which, by their own design, is statutorily immune to political pressure and barred by treaty from diluting its anti-inflationary mandate. Inflation already threatens the periphery; but the core countries need low interest rates and tight fiscal policy. They may well get the opposite. If Red-Green Germany, no longer an anchor of fiscal conservatism, overspends, the ECB could raise interest rates excessively as a show of strength.

Never in history has a multinational currency union succeeded. The EU has embarked on this unprecedentedly risky experiment with only a shallow, largely passive, consensus. Elites may feel more "European"; but as 2002 nears and people confront the trauma of pulping currencies that form part of their sense of history and community, they may turn more, not less, nationalist. In the lush euro-uplands of political rhetoric, lurk serpents of popular resentment ready to bite their masters' heels. It will take many years to find out whether these beasts can be truly tamed.

## A SCOTTISH LANDSLIDE

Dewar plays on the pipes of auld resentment

In Scotland a mix of politics and popular sentiment ferment into a headstrong brew. Almost two centuries have passed since the Highland Clearances, when rapacious Scottish landowners forcibly evicted thousands of crofters so as to turn their estates over to more profitable sheep farming. But, in the national imagination, resentment of this historical cruelty still festers. Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, was intent on soothing old grudges when he allowed land reform to rise to the top of his legislative agenda and, just over a year ago, set up the Land Reform Policy Group. But Mr Dewar was responding to more than merely nostalgic pressures yesterday when he unveiled a plan claimed by Labour to be the most important shake-up to land ownership since the Middle Ages. In Scotland, polls show the Labour Party increasingly threatened by nationalist sentiment. Mr Dewar hopes his radical proposals will compete with the Scottish National Party and thwart its further rise.

Certain aspects of the Scottish system of land tenure need overhauling. Medieval feudalism, long ended in England, endures in Scotland. Estate owners are feudal superiors, with rights and proscriptions over their vassals. This antiquated form of tenure is open to abuse. But the Land Reform Policy Group delegates specific responsibility for feudal reform to the Scottish Law Commission. Instead, its inquiries have addressed the emotive issue of large-scale land ownership. The possession of sweeping Scottish

estates by aristocrats, the English and foreigners arouses animosity. Those who live and work on the land can find their farms sold from under their feet without consultation or warning. Under the stewardship of a few notorious absentees, estates degenerate into depopulated wastelands, local communities wither and disperse. But, several, more responsible landowners keep the economies of otherwise unviable tracts of land alive. Shooting and fishing provide seasonal employment, vast integral estates provide a haven for wildlife, bringing valuable tourist income to their isolated communities.

Mr Dewar may hope to seduce the Scottish electorate. But his proposals to enable compulsory government purchase of mismanaged estates are rashly inflammatory. Irresponsible lairds could be deterred by a few, carefully aimed reforms, such as the establishment of an accessible register of land owners or legally enforceable minimum upkeep requirements. Several of Mr Dewar's ideas will prove, when tested in the Scottish Parliament, to be sensible components of gradual reform. They will lead to increased diversity of land use, and offer Scottish people greater involvement in running their communities. But in playing to the nationalist grandstand, Mr Dewar not only risks pointlessly exacerbating divisions between land owners and tenants, but shows that the winning of party political advantage in this emotive issue has become as covetous and expedient as the Clearances ever were.

## RELATIVE TRUST

Disturbing allegations of 'backdoor' euthanasia

Doctors today need to be as expert in ethics as anatomy. Fine judgments about the balance between relieving pain and preserving life are among the most difficult they have to face. Confronted with an elderly man who writhes in agony, a doctor might well feel it necessary to sedate him. Some doctors, however, are accused today of seeing sedation as more than just a temporary relief from pain.

Patients' children have noted that their parents have suffered from dehydration after sedation, and then died from an infection. The cry has been raised that doctors are allowing "backdoor euthanasia". Physicians argue they have simply been trying to ease suffering. As we report, there is a disturbing trend of such cases in Britain's hospitals. A thorough investigation of these deaths and clear guidance for doctors on the use of sedatives is essential if the medical profession is to avoid accusations of allowing doctors to play God with their patients.

While doctors treating patients in a persistent vegetative state must refer them to the courts before switching off any life support system or denying them food and water, doctors whose patients have

common illnesses are left to "exercise their clinical judgement". Some, it seems, sedate their patients and deprive them of food and water – allegedly without the patient's authorisation or that of his or her family. If a patient dies, the death certificate will commonly state that the cause of death was the underlying medical condition, not dehydration. This lack of regulation and transparency must be addressed.

The British Medical Association is currently consulting its members on the guidelines surrounding this practice. It should recommend greater clarity in the way doctors make decisions about a patient's treatment, and how they communicate that decision to the patient or his family. If doctors are expected to refer a case of patient in a permanent vegetative state to the courts, why should they not be expected to do the same for other patients? Yet this debate must not obscure the more crucial question: Why were doctors sedating their patients? They appear to be a multitude of reasons, depending on the specific circumstances. Whatever the case, the BMA should decide whether it is ethically right to help nature to take its course.

These  
we have  
missed

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number – 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Educating children about 'soft' and 'hard' drugs

From the Chief Executive of the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse

Sir, You report (January 2) that Keith Hellawell, the UK Anti-Drugs Coordinator is questioning the effectiveness of education about drug use.

In the Government's White Paper, *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain*, published last April, ten Secretaries of State said:

Action will be concentrated in areas of greatest need and risk. All drugs are harmful... And we will focus on those that cause the greatest damage including heroin and cocaine.

It is simply not true to say that drug education has "not worked". It is becoming clearer from research that drug education, delivered in the proper context and in the appropriate way, has the potential to reduce drug misuse or, at least, to delay the onset of experimentation. This in turn is more likely to reduce the prospect of a young person's drug use turning into a more harmful and risky dependence.

Following the White Paper, the Department for Education and Employment published guidance to schools and the youth service on good practice and drug education. *Protecting Young People*. In his foreword to the guidance, Keith Hellawell said:

Many schools have already established their drug education policies. Many examples of good practice have emerged. We need now to share this information and encourage all schools to take note of best practice...

As Mr Hellawell will be aware, the national curriculum is under review and advisers and ministers are already considering the future role of personal, social and health education, including drug education. This will undoubtedly reinforce the need for a comprehensive programme to be delivered to all young people from age five onwards.

Keith Hellawell and the Government

need to recognise that throughout the world there is no drugs education programme that can absolutely guarantee to stop young people from ever taking drugs. If that is the sole objective, then the policy will fail. The aim has to be to reduce the damage that misuse of drugs can cause our young people.

Yours faithfully,  
ROGER HOWARD,  
Chief Executive,  
Standing Conference on Drug Abuse,  
32-36 Loman Street, SE1 0EE.  
January 4

From Dr Richard Cookson

Sir, Keith Hellawell wants school-teachers to stop talking to British children about "soft" drugs. But will this change in policy actually succeed in preventing children from taking Ecstasy and cannabis? The truth is that nobody knows – and we may be missing an excellent opportunity to find out.

A rigorously designed scientific trial of this new drugs education campaign should be carried out in a carefully selected region of Britain. Over time, scientists could compare drug-taking behaviour in this region with drug-taking behaviour in other regions. This would provide high-quality scientific evidence about what form of drugs education campaign works best, which would be of genuine and lasting value in dealing with the British drugs problem.

A blanket change in drugs education policy across the whole of Britain will not provide useful scientific evidence, because scientists will not be able to disentangle the effects (if any) of Hellawell's policy from those of all the other possible influences on drug-taking behaviour. And all the old drugs arguments will continue, based not on scientific evidence but on the usual heady mixture of gut instinct, ideology and the understandable

I have always wondered why the French have had the patience to put up for so long with *quatre-vingt dix-neuf* in everyday speech. The answer seems to be that it is a legacy from Caesar's conquest of Gaul.

I have always wondered why the French have had the patience to put up for so long with *quatre-vingt dix-neuf* in everyday speech. The answer seems to be that it is a legacy from Caesar's conquest of Gaul.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE ENGLE,  
32 Wood Lane, Highgate, N6 1UB.  
January 1

From Mr Andrew Laurie

Sir, MDCCCLXXXVIII or MM? It comes as no surprise to read that Roman bureaucrats would have preferred to pepper their documents with long-windedness.

Museums around here are full of inscriptions made by those Romans who had better things to do (like defending the Empire) and so used abbreviations.

MM will do fine for me.

Yours sincerely,  
ANDREW LAURIE,  
VII St Oswald's Road, Hexham,  
Northumberland NE16 1HF.  
andrew.laurie@virgin.net  
January 1

From Mr Norman Sanders

Sir, "We shall all know what we will celebrate in the year MM," you tell us. Most certainly, the number MM is a nice round soft landing – an easily recognised end to two millennia – whereas its successor, MM, is an asymmetrical upstart, an appropriate intrusion signifying the start of another millennium.

The Roman system – which didn't contain a zero – offers indisputable evidence that the Government, the BBC, the Churches, the hoteliers and even *The Times* have got it wrong by a year.

There's hope yet that the Jubilee Line will be on time.

Yours faithfully,

NORMAN SANDERS,  
Walnut Tree Cottage,  
Tattingstone Park, Ipswich IP9 2NF.  
norman.sanders@compuserve.com  
January 1

From Mr Neil Roberts

Sir, Your reporter seems to have his emperors confused.

There was no Emperor Flavius, although Flavius was the family name of a dynasty of emperors. Work on building the Colosseum in Rome (known as the Flavian Colosseum rather than Flavius's Colosseum) was started by Vespasian, the first Flavian Emperor, and completed by his son Titus, the second.

Yours,

NEIL ROBERTS,  
18 Chestnut Street,  
Brighton, East Sussex BN2 1NA.  
nrob@pavilion.co.uk

From Mrs Helga Harrison

Sir, Wouldn't even a dying Caesar have remembered the vocative and cried "Et tu Brute", not "Et tu Brutus" (as in your headline today)?

Yours truly,

HELGA HARRISON,  
3 Westfield Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea,  
East Sussex TN37 7NE.  
January 1

From Miss Nan Miller

Sir, That's odd. I thought the clock Ruperto stood at X to III. How could III possibly rhyme with tea?

Yours sincerely,

NAN MILLER,  
35 Love Lane,  
Rochester, Kent ME1 1UD.  
January 1

From Web site

From Mr H. G. Dyke

Sir, My spider adheres rigidly to the Highway Code (letter, December 26).

He? spins his web at traffic lights or junctions, returning to the corner of the wing-mirror when the car moves off, thus causing no distraction.

Yours faithfully,

HAROLD DYKE,  
Avondale,  
Alexander Place, Abercanaid,  
Nr Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1SJ.  
December 27

From Present and correct

From Mr Ian Rae

Sir, For once I got a rather good shirt and tie for Christmas, so I tried them on and showed my wife.

The verdict? "You look different when you're clean."

Yours dazzlingly,

IAN RAE,  
The Doctor's House,  
1257 Bristol Road South,  
Northfield, Birmingham B31 2SW.  
December 29

Business letters, page 25

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## COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE  
January 5: The Duke of York this afternoon received Lieutenant Colonel Neil Baverstock at Sunninghill Park upon relinquishing command of 9th (County Antrim) Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment. His Royal Highness also received Lieutenant Colonel Sean O'Dwyer upon assuming command of 9th (County An-

trim) Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment.  
January 5: The Prince Edward, Patron, The National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, this evening attended a concert at the Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Glasgow (Mr Pat Lally). Lieutenant Colonel Sean O'Dwyer was in attendance.

## School news

Edgehill College, Devon  
Term begins today. The Entrance Examination to the Senior School will be held on Friday, January 29. The Annual Charity Week will begin on Monday, February 22, with the proceeds going to the RSPCA. The Careers Convention will be on Friday, March 5, and the College's production of *The Little Shop of Horrors* will take place at The Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple, on Tuesday, March 9, and Wednesday, March 10. Term ends on Wednesday, March 24.

The King's School, Canterbury  
The Lent term began yesterday. A Confirmation Service will be held in the Cathedral on Sunday, March 7, 1999, at which the Bishop of Maidstone will confirm. Music Scholarships examinations will take place on February 1 and 2, King's Scholarships on March 1-3, and Art Scholarships on March 4-6. Term will end on Saturday, March 20.

Portsmouth Grammar School  
Term begins on January 7, 1999. The Chairman of Governors hosts a Twelfth Night Dinner, for the 10 A-level prize-winners of the past two years. In the Square Tower on January 6, the inaugural Dickens Birthday Lecture Dickens and Murder will be given by Professor John Cary on February 6, preceded by a Reception at the Dickens Birthplace, the Guest of Honour is the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth. The annual exhibition takes place in the City Museum and Art Gallery from March 8, at the Private View on March 9 the monograph *A Turner for Portsmouth* will be launched. Governors, staff and pupils will take part in a Charity Talent Show on March 12, to commemorate prep pupil Angus Gibson, who died last term. The Choral Concert takes place in the Cathedral on March 13. Andrew Saunders and Emily Copsey have been elected as the first holders of sports Exhibitions. Details of all events, includ-

ing those in the Partnership initiative *The Dickens of a City*, are available from the school.

St Catherine's School, Bramley  
Spring term begins today at St Catherine's School, Bramley. Clare Clinton takes up her duties as Head Girl, and Charlton Edmund as Deputy Head Girl. Auditions for the Musical Society will take place on Saturday, January 9, and an assessment for the Sixth Form Art Scholarship on Friday, January 29. The Middle School Concert will be held on Friday, February 5, at 7.30pm in school. The GCSE Options Open Morning (for the parents of girls in Upper 4) will be on February 6. Long Leave is from February 13-21. The school play *The Evacuees* will be performed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 11, 12 and 13, in the Speech Hall. Term ends on Thursday, March 25.

Whitgift School  
Lent Term begins today and ends on March 31. Lord Kilpatrick of Kincraig, CBE, FRSE, is Guest of Honour at Prizegiving on January 15. The Junior Entrance Examination is on January 21. Haydn's Creation, in conjunction with the London Mozart Players, Whitgift Associate Musicians, will be performed at Croydon Parish Church on March 24 at 7.30pm. Our Town will be produced at Whitgift on March 25-27. For details of Arts Events please telephone 0181 685 9222 or e-mail: office@whitgift.co.uk. The Whitgift Foundation is a registered charity and exists for the education of pupils.

Woldingham School  
The Spring Term begins at Woldingham School today. The new £9 million Music and Drama Centre will be handed over by the contractors at the end of January and will be in use during the term. The Centre will be officially opened by Mr Chris Patten, CH, on May 5. The term ends on March 26.



A bust of Leonardo da Vinci is carefully lifted ready to go back in its rightful place in the Central Hall at the Royal Academy, London. The return of the eight plaster busts, which include Michelangelo, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Christopher Wren, marks the completion of seven months' restoration work on the Central Hall. The restored gallery will be open to the public for the first time when the exhibition *Monet in the 20th Century* opens on January 23

## Birthdays today

Major Kenneth Adams, Honorary Fellow, St George's House, Windsor Castle, 79; Mr Malcolm Appleby, engraver, 53; Mr Rowan Atkinson, actor and comedian, 44; Mr Paul Asinger, golfer, 39; Lord Balfe of Burleigh, 72; Mr Roger Barton, MEP, 54; Mr A.J. Bowcott, chief executive, Berisford International, 48; Sir Ashley Bramall, former chairman, GIC, 53; Sir Robert Clark, former deputy chairman, TSB Group, 75; Mr John Croft, criminologist and oil painter, 76; Mr Angus Deayton, writer and broadcaster, 43; Mr Kapil Dev, cricketer, 40; General Sir Martin Farndale, 70; Sir Hugh Fish, water scientist, 76; Mr Mike

Foxe, British-born astronaut, 42; Mr Ronald Goldstein, joint founder, Superdrin, 62; Mr Barry John, former rugby player, 57; Mr P.J. Kavanagh, writer, 68; Sir Christopher Lewington, chairman, TI Group, 67; Miss Nancy Lopez, golfer, 42; Lord McColl of Dulwich, 66; Sir Hamish MacLeod, former Financial Secretary, Hong Kong, 59; Sir Brian Mofat, chairman, British Society of Victoria Adams, 80; Mr Michael Moore, 57; Mr Richard Nentwig, athlete, 38; Lord Plowden, 92; Mr Bill Sire, travel unionist, 79; Miss Sylvia Syms, actress, 66; Mr Terry Venables, football manager, 56; Sir Ernest Woodroffe, former chairman, Unilever, 87.

FOOT, British-born astronomer, 42; Mr Ronald Goldstein, joint founder, Superdrin, 62; Mr Barry John, former rugby player, 57; Mr P.J. Kavanagh, writer, 68; Sir Christopher Lewington, chairman, TI Group, 67; Miss Nancy Lopez, golfer, 42; Lord McColl of Dulwich, 66; Sir Hamish MacLeod, former Financial Secretary, Hong Kong, 59; Sir Brian Mofat, chairman, British Society of Victoria Adams, 80; Mr Michael Moore, 57; Mr Richard Nentwig, athlete, 38; Lord Plowden, 92; Mr Bill Sire, travel unionist, 79; Miss Sylvia Syms, actress, 66; Mr Terry Venables, football manager, 56; Sir Ernest Woodroffe, former chairman, Unilever, 87.

## Anniversaries

BIRTHS: St John of Arc, Donreym, France, 1412; Jacques Etienne Monge, balloonist, Annecy, France, 1745; Gustave Doré, artist and book illustrator, Strasbourg, 1832; Tom Mix, film actor, El Paso, Texas, 1881.  
DEATHS: Fanny Burney, novelist and diarist, London, 1840; Louis Braille, inventor of the reading system for the blind, Paris, 1852; Sir George Grey, meteorologist, Birr, Co. Offaly, Ireland, 1858; Theodore Roosevelt, 26th American President, 1901-09; Oyster Bay, New York, 1919; Victor Fleming, film director, Phoenix, Arizona, 1949; A.J. Cronin, novelist, 1981.  
Samuel Morse gave the first public demonstration of his electric telegraphic system, 1838.

## Forthcoming marriages

Mr T.C. Boles and Miss D.C. Lewis

The engagement is announced between Timothy, only son of the late Mr Vernon Boles and of Mrs Boles of Cline, Inverness-shire, and Clare, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Jim Lewis, of Kirk Michael, Isle of Man.

Mr J.T.S. Chippendale and Miss C.E.J. Hooton

The engagement is announced between Justin, eldest son of Mr Thomas Chippendale, and Claire, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Hooton, of Kimpton, Hampshire.

Mr S.P. Gray and

Miss A.J.M. Minton Beddoes. The engagement is announced between Simon, elder son of Mr Brian Gray, of Carshalton, Surrey, and Andrea, daughter of Major and Mrs Stewart Minton Beddoes, of Cheney Longville, Shropshire.

Mr G.W.H. Hall-Careys and Miss E.J. Baldwin

The engagement is announced between Wade, son of Mr and Mrs Hall-Careys, of Newbury, Berkshire, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Grant Baldwin, of Wallingford, South Australia.

Mr A.J.R. Hickey and Miss J.C.E. Eustoper

The engagement is announced between Ashley, elder son of Mr and Mrs Keith Hicks, of Sliford, Cower, Oxon, and Julia, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Timothy Eustoper, of Langford, Devon.

Mr J.H.T. Jarvis and Dr J. Simmonds

The engagement is announced between Antony, son of Mr and Mrs M.H. Legge, of Bradford-on-Teme, Herefordshire, and Claire, daughter of Mr and Mrs John West, of Padworth Common, Berkshire.

Mr P.W.H. McCormick and Miss C.T. Shepherd-Smith

The engagement is announced between Peter, youngest son of Colonel and Mrs John McCormick, of Dulwich, London, and Claire, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs T.D. Shepherd-Smith, of Ewston, Hampshire.

Mr A.S. Mewes and Ms S.J. Rolinski

The engagement is announced between Andrew, younger son of Mr and Mrs Peter Mewes, of Dulwich, London, and Sylvia, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Linda Rolinski, of New York.

Dr R.T. Miles and Miss C. Chaudhary

The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Miles, of Bisham, East Sussex, and Camilla, younger daughter of Mrs Carole Allen and Mr Qayyum Chaudhary, both of Birmingham.

Dr J.R. Payne and Dr J.R. Tennick

The engagement is announced between John, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Herbert Jarvis, of Bembury, Isle of Wight, and Chloe, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin Tennick, of Canterbury, Kent.

Mr I.H. Wafts and Miss J.L. Fleming

The engagement is announced between Ian, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Wafts, of St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Mr J.W. Tappin and Miss W.M. Hawes

The engagement is announced between Neil, youngest son of Mr and Mrs John Tappin, of Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey, and Wendy, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Hawes, of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

Mr A.J.M. Wilkinson and Miss S.J.F. Bradstock

The engagement is announced between Andrew, youngest son of Mr and Mrs David Wilkinson, of Renton, Derbyshire, and Samantha, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Bradstock, of Kirkdale, East Yorkshire.

Mr J.V.N. Payne and Miss M.L. Spurting

The engagement is announced between Jeremy, elder son of Mr and Mrs Colin Payne, of Cape Town, South Africa, and Miranda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jeremy Spurting, of Dorkenfield, Farnham.

Mr B. Reff and Miss Z.E. West

The engagement is announced between Barnaby, only son of the late Mr Raymond Reff and of Mrs Reff, of Barnes, London, and Zoe, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs John West, of Padworth Common, Berkshire.

Mr J.P. Rose and Miss E.H. Roberts

The engagement is announced between Jonathan, younger son of Mr and Mrs Paul Rose, of Claygate, Surrey, and Helen, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Miles Roberts, of Taunton, Somerset.

Mr B.W. Rustling and Miss A.G. Castle

The engagement is announced between Brian, younger son of the late Mr Kenneth Rustling and of Mrs Anne Rustling, of Hindhead, Surrey, and Annabel, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher R. Castle, of Malling, Kent.

Mr C.D. Smith-Wright and Miss S.M. Ainsworth

The engagement is announced between Christopher, elder son of Mr and Mrs Nigel Smith-Wright, of Wimborne, Dorset, and Sophie, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Miles Ainsworth, of Wimborne.

Mr D.R. Taylor and Miss C. Chaudhary

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Members of the Order and Medallists who

to whom should apply for a ticket as soon as possible, and not later than Friday, March 12, 1999, for the service for the reception will be restricted to Members of the Royal Victorian Order and holders of the Royal Victorian Order Medal, and for the service for tickets for spouses or other guests who are not members or Medallists of the Order. Honorary Members and Medallists are not eligible to attend.

## Royal Victorian Order

The Queen is commanded that a service of the Royal Victorian Order is to be held in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, at 11.00am on Thursday, April 29, 1999, followed by a service of the Royal Victorian Order Medal in the Chapel of St George, Windsor Castle, for all

Members and Medallists of the Order attending the service.

Owing to the limited seating capacity of the Chapel, tickets for the service for the reception will be restricted to Members of the Royal Victorian Order and holders of the Royal Victorian Order Medal, and for the service for tickets for spouses or other guests who are not members or Medallists of the Order. Honorary Members and Medallists are not eligible to attend.

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OBITUARIES

**ROLF LIEBERMANN**

Rolf Liebermann, opera house director and composer, died in Paris on January 2 aged 88. He was born in Zurich on September 14, 1910.

A small piece of transparent plastic sat on Rolf Liebermann's desk when he was director of the Paris Opéra in the 1970s. One side had the amusement BOSS HEUREUX and the other BOSS PAS HEUREUX: boss, happy, boss, grumpy. Liebermann had been given the object as a joke but he kept it as a management tool, although that was scarcely necessary. He exuded authority, with his imposing frame, wide shoulders and patrician brow.

He had been brought in by the French Government in 1973 to save the Opéra, which was in as parlous a state as Covent Garden is now. Standards had fallen and much public derision was hurled at it. It had become a national and governmental embarrassment. If Liebermann had failed in his task then it might have closed for ever.

He succeeded. Under him it became an international house once more. The glamour returned and so did contemporary opera. Perhaps the single most important event during Liebermann's seven-year reign there was the first performance of the three-act version of Alban Berg's *Lulu*, completed by Friedrich Cerha, conducted by Pierre Boulez and directed by Patrice Chéreau in 1979. The whole of musical Europe attended, together with a number of leading politicians who felt themselves up to handling Berg. The Cerha *Lulu* was soon to become standard the world over.

That night summed up many of Liebermann's personal crusades. For a great deal of his life he had championed the Viennese school, the city where he had learned much of his music. And his doors were always open to the new and experimental. He helped to create the stars of the future. Plácido Domingo being a major beneficiary, but he tried in Paris to ensure that his audience was not fossilised in the past.

Rolf Liebermann came, on his father's side, from a Jewish family of bankers. They emigrated from Berlin at the end of the last century to Switzerland, where his father became a prominent lawyer. Rolf was intended for the same profession, but soon gave it up in preference to music. The family had plenty of inclination in that direction and Einstein was among those who came to the house to join in chamber music evenings. The young Liebermann studied composition in Switzerland under Wladimir Vogel, while playing in a jazz band. He moved to Vienna in the mid-1930s with ambitions to become a conductor. There he worked with Hermann



Rolf Liebermann (left) with Igor Stravinsky in Hamburg, 1963

Scherchen and became the German maestro's private secretary.

He was thrust straight away into the centre of the Viennese School, and his lifelong love for Berg and Schönberg began. But the Anschluss meant that Liebermann, with his Jewish parentage, had to return swiftly to his native Switzerland. There he decided to give up a potential career as a conductor and turned to composition instead. At this time he met another Jewish refugee, Georg Solti, and a friendship was formed that lasted until Solti's death in 1997.

After the end of the war Liebermann's career began to take its final shape, which was a 'split' between composer and musical administrator. He took charge of music for the Swiss-German radio station in Zurich and became manager of the Beromün-

ster Radio Orchestra. During this period he wrote a number of operas, including *Penelope* (performed at Salzburg in 1954) and *The School for Wives*, which after a number of revisions became another Salzburg opera in 1957.

The mid-1950s also brought the piece by which he will probably be most remembered, *Concerto for Jazz Band and Orchestra*, a typical Liebermann fusion of two very different groups of instruments and a reflection of his double taste for classical music and the avant-garde. There was, too, some cacophony in *Concert des échanges*, commissioned by the city of Lausanne for its exhibition in 1964. Liebermann, inspired by the noises produced by the clattering typewriters and telexes in a busy office, scored it for 54 "industrial machines". Fortunately they did not

appear on the concert platform but were prerecorded.

Meanwhile his career as an administrator had taken off. In 1957 he went to the North German Radio as musical director and from there to the Hamburg State Opera, replacing Günther Rennert. He turned that distinctly staid house into a Mecca for devotees of contemporary opera. During his time there, from 1959 to 1972, he commissioned two dozen new works, which included Hans Werner Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg* and Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun*. He championed other 20th-century composers, such as Igor Stravinsky and Ernst Krenek, and he encouraged a new generation of singers, bringing to Hamburg early in their careers such men as Plácido Domingo, Kurt Moll and Hans Sotin.

Liebermann's success in Hamburg made him a natural choice to haul the Paris Opéra out of the quagmire. He turned to his old friend from the war years, Georg Solti, for help. Solti came to conduct a glittery *Marriage of Figaro* directed by Giorgio Strehler. Plácido Domingo arrived to sing Manrico in *Il trovatore* which amazingly had never previously been performed at the Palais Garnier. The international touch had returned to a house which had spent too much time contemplating its own navel.

*Lulu* apart, Liebermann's greatest Paris coup was to persuade Olivier Messiaen, no lover of opera houses, to write *Saint François d'Assise* for the Palais Garnier. He was also a considerable influence on the career of the director Patrice Chéreau.

When he retired from the Paris Opera in 1980 at the age of 70 Liebermann felt free to take up composition again (though he was to return to Hamburg for three more seasons as general manager in 1985). His responsibilities as an opera house director had given him no time for this part of his life, and in any case he was always scrupulous about not using his administrative power to promote his own work.

He wrote the opera *La Forêt*, based on the Ostrovsky play, for Geneva, where it was premiered in 1987. This was commissioned by the director of the Geneva Opera, Hugues Gall, who had worked closely with him during his seven years in Paris. Gall was a pupil who learnt much from Liebermann and it was no surprise that he was called from Geneva to Paris three years ago to solve yet another crisis at the Opéra. He did, however, succeed, and the Bastille will present Liebermann's final stage work, based on the *Medea* story, in 2002.

Rolf Liebermann was twice married. He is survived by his second wife, Hélène Vida, a television journalist whom he met when she interviewed him, and by the son of his first marriage.

**PERSONAL COLUMN**

DEATHS

SCOTCHMAN - Ellis died peacefully on New Year's Day, 1998. Cremation at Mortlake Crematorium at 2.30pm on Thursday, 14th January 1999.

STEELE-SMITH - On Sunday 25th December in hospital aged 79. Beloved husband of Frederick of Ilkley. Dear wife loved husband of the late Margaret. The funeral service will be held at the Priory Church of St Mary and St Cuthbert, Bolton Abbey on Thursday January 14th at 11.30am. Interment at Ilkley Cemetery. Family flowers only; donations if desired to Ardenwood Marie Care, Care, Cranbury Drive, Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

STEWART - Alison M C (née Wilson) of Carlton, Suffolk. Peacefully on December 30th 1998 aged 89. Beloved wife of G.W.F. Stewart O.B.E. Much loved mother of Hugh (decd), Jean and Rosemary, grandmother of Mervyn, Mary and the late Peter. Family Funeral. Thanksgiving service to be held at a loving and happy home.

TUNNER - F.J.W. Creek on January 3rd aged 82. Much loved by his son Alan and family. Funeral Service at St Paul's Church, Weymouth Garden City on 13th January 1999. No flowers but donations if desired to the Royal British Legion Charitable Trust c/o Coughlan's, 1 Southfield, Walwyn Garden City AL7 4ST.

WALDO - On 15th December, 1998, peacefully at 3, Beatrix Place, Kensington, London, W8. Beloved wife of Charles. Waldo, aged 80 years. Cremation is private, but any enquiries to Barnes & Sons 0181 743 4322.

WEAR - Rev. Michael John, on 31st December, passed away peacefully at 80 years of age. Funeral Service at the London Oratory, Knightsbridge, Mass at 11 o'clock on Friday 12th January.

WHEELER - On January 3rd, peacefully in Halfpenny Nursing Home, Tividale Woods, Birmingham. Beloved wife of 50 years, Doreen. Wheeler, mother of Clive, William, Dominic and Malcolm, stepmother of Angus and Katrina and much loved grandmother. Private funeral. A Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, 4th February at 12.00 noon at St. Margaret's Church, Lichfield, Staffs. E.C. Wheeler, if desired to Private Research - Campaign U.K., c/o J.K. May, Blackwater House, Barfield Road West, Merton, Colchester, Essex CO5 8JS.

WYLDRIDGE - Sir William, died on 2nd January at home after an illness borne with great courage and dignity. Dear loved husband of Charlotte, Alexa and Francis. Late son of Sir Charles and Lady Doherty on 31st December at Padthaway, Cyprus. Francis, Padthaway, Arkley, Church, Padthaway, on 7th January at 2.30pm.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

WOOLLEY - John, peacefully on New Year's Day, 1998. Beloved husband and father of Michael, Belinda, Nicholas and Christopher. Beloved grandfather of mother-in-law and grandmother. Adored by his family, she will be greatly missed. He will be greatly missed by his wife and all his friends for her wisdom, generosity and love of life. Cremation private. The following service will be held at the Royal Chapel of All Souls, West Sussex, on date to be advised. No flowers please, donations if desired to the RNLI.

WYATT - On 29th December, 1998, in the Royal Society of Teachers of Dancing (I.T.D.) benevolent Fund c/o Powers Fund, 100 Pall Mall, London SW1. Tel: 0171 830 4222.

YOUNG - Leofric, died peacefully at Leukaemia on 4th January. Our most beloved late husband of 40 years, father of Julian and Charles, father-in-law of Ahmed and Virginia, grandfather of Oliver, Amelie, Sophie and Daniel, close brother of Mervyn, Mary, and the late Peter. Family Funeral. Thanksgiving service to be held at a loving and happy home.

ZURKOWSKY - F.J.W. Creek on January 3rd aged 82. Much loved by his son Alan and family. Funeral Service at St Paul's Church, Weymouth Garden City on 13th January 1999. No flowers but donations if desired to the Royal British Legion Charitable Trust c/o Coughlan's, 1 Southfield, Walwyn Garden City AL7 4ST.

DOMESTIC & PRIVATE

DICKEN - Timothy, 6th January 1999. Loved and remembered.

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WYNTON - Kaye died peacefully on New Year's Eve aged 85. Devoted wife of the late Ralph. Wynton, much loved mother of Anne, David, Richard, grandmother of William, Edward, Pollyanna, Alice and Jake, great-grandmother of Oscar.

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WINTER SPORTS

SKI TRAVEL - For general details in Tel: 0171 505 0000

THE COACH & HORSES - A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at the Clement Danes, London, Trinity Church, Fleet Street, EC4 on 22nd January. All welcome. Please confirm attendance by telephoning Adrian Ford 0171 732 218.

WINTER SERVICES

## NEWS

**Saddam tries to lure jets into trap**

American fighter aircraft attacked Iraqi planes in the air for the first time for six years yesterday as Saddam Hussein stepped up his campaign of provocation. Six air-to-air missiles were fired at warplanes in the southern no-fly zone, which was being patrolled by F14 Navy jets and F15 fighters. Iraqi MiG and Mirage warplanes committed eight separate violations with between 13 and 15 planes.....Page 1

**'Backdoor euthanasia' investigated**

The deaths of at least 50 hospital patients around Britain are being investigated by police and health officials amid allegations of a creeping tide of backdoor euthanasia. Seven separate inquiries are looking into claims that doctors have withheld intravenous drips from dehydrated patients, often while they were under sedation, and left them to die from thirst.....Pages 1, 9

**Yemen inquiry halted**

Two Scotland Yard detectives were told last night to leave Aden on the first available flight after suddenly being refused permission to interview the leader of the gang that abducted 16 Western hostages.....Pages 1, 12

**King of the slopes**

Prince Harry gave a powerful boost to the latest craze of snowblading when he executed a small but perfect ski jump in front of the world's media, and landed on his feet unaided by poles.....Page 1

**Church takes to Che**

The image of the communist revolutionary Che Guevara is being used by Britain's churches to represent Jesus Christ in an Easter advertising campaign. The Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church have distanced themselves from the campaign.....Page 3

**Dome Minister's vow**

Lord Falconer of Thoroton promised to "crack the whip" to get the Millennium Dome ready in time as he visited the site in southeast London for the first time.....Page 4

**Hospital condemned**

Two senior doctors were cleared of the manslaughter of a 12-year-old cancer victim as an Old Bailey judge condemned Great Ormond Street Hospital for a "chapter of accidents and misunderstandings".....Page 5

**Polo is the mint with the soggy vole**

In the Ayrshire seaside town of Largs, hit by severe flooding in this week's storms, one famous sweet will be forever known as the "mint with the vole". The new epithet is down to the ingenuity of a local petshop manager who used plastic Super Polo Mint containers to construct makeshift lifejackets for hamsters and guinea pigs trapped in his shop by floods.....Page 3

**Management macho**

Women who succeed as managers do well not because of their feminine characteristics, such as sensitivity and warmth, but because of their ability to adopt an aggressive personality, according to new research.....Page 6

**Village green saved**

Villagers have plucked a medieval green from the clutches of developers after their campaign raised the £350,000 needed to buy the land.....Page 7

**Lottery land plan**

Lottery money is to be used instead of public cash to bankroll a fund aimed at helping communities buy Scottish estates from their lairds. The reforms will give the Government powers to evict absent landowners.....Page 8

**Euro 'high horse'**

Britain should get off its "high horse" and join the euro, according to the German press, echoing the confidence of the Bonn Government that the Blair Administration will sign up for the single European currency sooner rather than later.....Page 10

**Sierra Leone funds**

Britain announced that it was giving an extra £1 million to support the Nigerian-led forces fighting the rebels in Sierra Leone. The money will pay for communications and logistical back-up, but not for arms.....Page 11



Tim Smith and Justin Shepherd, from Westerville, Ohio, relax in their igloo after America's cold snap forced the cancellation of school

**BUSINESS**

**Vodafone merger:** Vodafone, Britain's largest mobile phone company, has proposed a £60 billion-plus merger with its US rival.....Page 21

**Carpetbaggers:** The Bradford & Bingley, under siege yesterday from carpetbagging investors, is drawing up battle plans to fight off attempts to take the building society public.....Page 21

**Traveler move:** If timing is the secret to good comedy, then the management of Traveler, the operator of airport exchange bureaux, should have been rolling in the aisles.....Page 21

**Markets:** The FTSE 100 index rose 78.80 points to 5958.2. The pound fell 0.44 cents to \$1.6555 but rose 0.10p against the euro to 71.19p. The sterling index fell to 98.7.....Page 24

**Sierra Leone funds**

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# THE TIMES



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Taylor savours his moment of triumph.

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

Britain's biggest mobile phone group seeks £60bn American merger

## Vodafone on line to AirTouch

By CHRIS AVRES

**VODAFONE**, Britain's largest mobile phone group, has proposed a £60 billion-plus merger with AirTouch, its US rival.

The talks were revealed yesterday, hours before AirTouch was set to finalise a similar deal with Bell Atlantic, the US fixed-line and mobile telephone company. It is thought that both Vodafone and Bell value AirTouch at about \$45 billion (£27 billion).

Vodafone, which has nearly five million British customers, has long been rumoured to be interested in buying or merging with AirTouch, which is based in San Francisco. Both companies are focused mainly on mobile phone markets and have complementary, rather than competitive, European operations. AirTouch has stakes in mobile phone companies in Germany, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Belgium.

Sources close to Vodafone said the company did not plan to sell off AirTouch's North

SHARES in Colt Telecom, the star performer on the London Stock Exchange, surged 8.8 per cent as speculation mounted that NTL, the Nasdaq-listed cable TV group, was about to launch a £7 billion bid. NTL, which recently agreed a £160 million deal to buy Newcastle United, declined to comment on the speculation. However, it admitted that it was interested in the possibilities thrown up by Colt's development of fibre optic cable networks around Europe's financial centres. Colt said it was not in takeover talks. Yesterday's share surge, coming on the back of a 500 per cent rise in 1998, values Colt at £6.1 billion. It has never made a profit and its turnover for 1998 is unlikely to exceed £220 million.

American business, in spite of its traditional lack of interest in the US market. "There are long memories in some places," one insider said. "We weren't interested in the early days, but the world is soon going to move to UMTS [the Universal Mobile Telecommunications System], and our attitude has changed."

Chris Gent, chief executive of Vodafone, is likely to head the merged group if the deal proceeds, chosen ahead of Sam Ginn, AirTouch's chairman. It is understood, however, that the question of management has

not yet been seriously discussed. Vodafone sources also emphasised that the deal would be "a merger of equals" and was likely to involve an American-style stock-for-stock transaction. The deal would create the world's first truly global mobile phone company, with Vodafone keeping its London listing. The two companies have about 22 million customers between them.

Vodafone's brief statement to the Stock Exchange yesterday said: "Following recent press comment, Vodafone confirms that it has made an approach to AirTouch regarding a possible merger. There can be no assurance that any agreement can or will be reached."

Shares in Vodafone, which was demerged from Racal, the electronics group, in 1991, rose ahead 61.5p yesterday to close at £11.10p, leaving it valued at £34.3 billion.

Although many analysts consider a merger between Vodafone and AirTouch to be a "dream deal", it could still fall apart if Bell makes a higher offer. But the Bell deal had already been stalled over fears that good will charges after a merger would hit profits.

Yesterday's merger frenzy came only a day after figures showed that 2.5 million British consumers bought mobile phones in the three months running up to Christmas. Some analysts now estimate that 40 per cent of Britons will own a mobile phone by 2000, about double the proportion today.

Tempus, page 24

ADRIAN SHERRATT

## B&B pulls plug on pursuit of windfalls

By CAROLINE MERRILL

THE Bradford & Bingley, under siege yesterday from carpetbagging investors, is drawing up battle plans to fight off attempts to take the building society public.

As word spread of plans to challenge Bradford & Bingley's mutual status, Britain's second-biggest building society announced that it had been forced to suspend the opening of new savings accounts.

The decision was taken in the face of fears that it was set to be overwhelmed with speculative account openings from so-called carpetbaggers keen to benefit from any cash-

share windfall should the Bradford & Bingley float on the stock market.

Conversion could bring windfalls of about £1,000 to the society's 2.5 million members. A flotation on the Stock Exchange would take it in on the cusp of immediate entry in the FTSE 100 index.

At branches in the City yesterday the society was forced to shut its doors to potential investors at lunchtime as queues snaked out into the street.

Stephen Major, a chartered surveyor currently working as a plumber, has put forward a motion to the society's annual meeting in April proposing that the board take steps to convert the society to a plc and distribute shares to members. Mr Major, from County Antrim, is also seeking election to the board.

Lindsay Mackinlay and Christopher Rodrigues, the society's chairman and chief executive respectively, were confident yesterday that they would be able to defeat the resolution, pointing out that its stance as a mutual had helped it to grow over the past two and a half years from an asset size of £16 billion to £22 billion. Its branch network has more than doubled from 250 to 600 over the same period.

Mr Rodrigues said the society would have to spend about £5 million on marketing its 2.5 million members, and on taking advertisements in the press to explain the board's position. "We do not see the need to float. It would impair our competitive position. We would have to pay dividends to shareholders and more tax."

Mr Mackinlay said that he hoped that the society would be able to re-open for savers after the AGM.

Analysts believe that while the link of Ford, Honda and BMW would be the dream company as the industry is poised for consolidation, it could remain just a dream. Although a takeover by Ford has been touted, industry experts believe that merger agreements are more likely.

Ford has a market valuation of \$72 billion (£44 billion) with about \$22 billion in cash while Honda is worth \$65 billion and BMW \$23 billion. Both potential target companies could be expected to attract bid premiums as they are regarded by many analysts as the best in their countries. With rumours of a tie-up with Nissan resurfacing, Renault shares closed 1.2 per cent higher at \$69.9.

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Commentary, page 23

## Bid fever grips car industry

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BID fever shook up European motor industry stocks yesterday on repeated rumours that Ford is attempting a three-way link with BMW and Honda and on speculation that Fiat, Volvo and Renault may join in the consolidation in the sector.

With industry gossip going into overdrive during the Detroit Motor Show, shares of BMW jumped by more than 5 per cent in early trading before falling back later when both BMW and Honda denied the existence of talks. Ford refused to confirm or deny the speculation. BMW shares closed 1.2 per cent higher at \$69.9.

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Commentary, page 23

## Soros ready to keep fund open

GEORGE SOROS, the international financier, has backed tracked on his decision to close the Quantum Emerging Growth Fund after finding suitable managers for the investments (Richard Miles writes).

Edgar Astaire, a leading London broker of shares in Soros funds, said: "Mr Soros has reversed a decision in October to wind up the \$1.5 billion (900 million) fund which hedges against movements in emerging markets."

Mr Astaire also confirmed that Nick Roditi, reportedly the UK's highest paid executive and one of the best known hedge managers, is returning after a three-month absence due to ill health to manage the \$1.7 billion Quota fund. It is closing to new investors in an attempt to limit its size.

Mr Astaire said that he hoped that the society would be able to re-open for savers after the AGM.

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Commentary, page 23

## Shares rise to highest level for five months

By JANET BUSH AND RICHARD MILES

LONDON shares jumped to their highest level for five months, fuelled by gains in telecoms and drugs issues, a firm's performance on Wall Street and hopes of more UK interest rate cuts. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed 78.8 points higher at 5,958.2.

Trading on European stock markets was far more subdued than during Monday's euro birthday rally as traders and investors turned cautious ahead of today when the first euro trades are settled. Paris shares closed up a further 1.28 per cent but Frankfurt's DAX index fell 0.5 per cent lower.

Last Friday David Clementi, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, gave warning that London-based investment banks could face significant losses through computer glitches and human errors linked to the introduction of the euro. There have, however, been few problems reported to date.

The euro was upstaged by a resurgent yen yesterday and slipped slightly against the

yen deals conducted earlier in the week are settled.

The first transactions expected to be settled are spot trades in the euro, followed by transactions in other markets later this week and next. Bankers said the day's events would prove whether their conversion work over the weekend had been adequate.

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Commentary, page 23

## Travelex chiefs claim the last laugh

By RICHARD MILES

UNDETERRED by a projected two-thirds decline in demand for foreign exchange, Clive Kahn, finance director of Travelex, believes that the firm can continue to grow by snapping up any loose change business discarded by high street banks in the wake of the euro.

Mr Kahn said: "The high street market for foreign exchange is expected to reduce by 65 per cent following the euro's introduction. Banks will turn their backs on the business as unprofitable."

Mr Kahn, finance director of Travelex, believes that the firm can continue to grow by snapping up any loose change business discarded by high street banks in the wake of the euro.

Travelex has more than 300 exchange outlets across the globe, although less than 25 per cent of those are located in "euroland". It has already negotiated exclusive agreements to operate at Charles de Gaulle and at Orly, the two airports serving Paris.

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# Drug companies inject pace into new year trade

THIS could be a bumper year for drug companies. Glaxo Wellcome extended its record-breaking run yesterday with a leap of 104p to a high of £22.33 as 5.5 million shares worth about £189 million changed hands.

Glaxo, along with other drug companies, has benefited from new year share tips and there has even been talk that Britain's biggest drug company may be poised to make a spoiling bid for rival Zeneca, up 80p to £27.74, already the subject of an agreed merger with Sweden's Astra.

Also making headway was SmithKline Beecham, the back of a 'buy' recommendation from Dresdner Kleinwort Benson.

Other leading shares were much in demand, especially those linked with possible corporate activity such as Barclays, up 50p to £13.42, and GEC, 20p stronger at £33.50, where Cazenove, the broker, has set a target price of 600p.

Strong performances by the drug and telecom sectors paved the way for a positive performance by the rest of the equity market. But despite further strong gains for the Dow Jones industrial average in early trading, prices in London closed below their best levels.

The FTSE 100 index finished 78.8 points up at 5,980.2 having briefly touched 5,980.5. The gains were less spectacular among the second-liners and that was reflected in the FTSE 250 index, up 19.2 to 4,870.2. Total turnover reached 962 million shares.

Retailers claiming they have done well over the Christmas period are a rare commodity these days. However, Safeway, it seems, is the genuine article. It says sales were good, despite a slow start, that was offset by a strong finish.

In November, Safeway, down 10p to 268p, reported sales in the first five weeks of the second half up 5 per cent. Peter Jones, at Peal Hunt, the broker, expects that sort of growth to be maintained.

By contrast, Asda, down 5p to 188p, may have found the going difficult. Pannier Gordon, the broker, remains worried about the benefits of promotional activity and has reiterated its "sell" recommendation for the shares.

Yesterday's profits warning from the German software giant SAP sent a shudder



David Webster, the chairman, and Colin Smith, the chief executive, right, saw shares of Safeway fall 104p to 268p.

through British software specialists. Losses were seen in Ecsort Group, 45p to £20.55, MMT Computing, 35p to 82p; London Bridge Software, 47p to £12.40; MSB International, 34p to 280p and CMG, 23p to £15.77. Moving against the trend, MSW Technology stood out with a rise of 15p to 135p.

Aradis continued to hit

new depths with a fall of 5p to 56p. Earlier this week Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, underlined the Top Shop and Burton retailer, with a profit downgrade. Yesterday it was joined by ABN Amro Hoare Govett, which is reckoned to have reduced its profit numbers by 20 per cent.

HSBC Securities, the broker, has raised its recommenda-

tion for Cobham, 33p higher at 713p. It has moved from "hold" to "buy" and rates the defence and civil aerospace group as "an attractive proposition for 1999".

Diploma was one of the

worst-performing stocks, falling 41p to 1224p after it gave

warning that profits for the current year will be lower than last time round. It blamed declining trading conditions.

It seems we stuffed ourselves with record amounts of seasonal fare over the Christmas holiday. Cranswick, up 30p to 285p, says it sold four million chipolatas, cocktail and ordinary sausages in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Most of it was sold through J Sainsbury, Asda and William Morrison.

Syntex Group recorded 3p to 179p with sources close to the company saying the company has not received any bid approaches. The motor distributor has been the subject of intense bid speculation that has lifted it from a low of 123p.

Traders reported some heavy turnover in Fortune Oil, up 4p to 163p, as more than ten million shares changed hands. This followed the put-through of at least two large lines of stock, including one of four million at 24p and 2.5 million at 287p.

Servonex touched 147p before ending 14p firmer at 1274p on talk of a bid from City Technology, 45p better at 2034p.

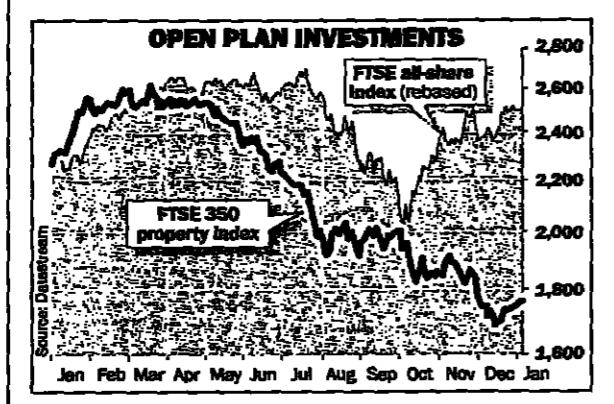
Over on the Amex, Honeycombe Leisure reached a new high of 741p, a rise of 5p. Earlier this week James Baer, director, bought 3,000 shares at 70p, taking his total holding to 625,000, or 28 per cent.

□ GILT-EDGE: The bond market had a neglected look as investors sought other places to invest money. Prices drifted across the yield curve as money was ploughed into both the credit and swaps market.

In the future pit, the March series of the long gilt retreated 39p to £19.25 as more than 23,000 contracts were completed.

Cash issues saw Treasury 8 per cent 2021 drop 20p to £151.60, while among shorter-dated stocks, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was 13p easier at 92.70.

□ NEW YORK: US shares moved higher in generally cautious early trading. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 58.44 points to 9,242.71.



Its views may not set the property sector alight but, it is hoped, it may be enough to prompt other brokers to take a fresh look at the commercial property market.

CSFB's move also managed to stimulate British Land 164p to 473p, Bradford Property 93p to 211p, Chelfield 15p to 270p, Escom 13p to 18p, Hammar 184p to 372p, MEPC 164p to 422p, and Peel Holdings 174p to 532p. Only time will tell whether this is the start of a sustained rally.

It has also raised its recommendation for one of the Tempus tips of the year, Land Securities, up 29p to 800p, and also for Great Portland, 54p higher at 198p, from "sell" to "hold".

Yesterday's profits warning from the German software giant SAP sent a shudder

through British software specialists. Losses were seen in Ecsort Group, 45p to £20.55, MMT Computing, 35p to 82p; London Bridge Software, 47p to £12.40; MSB International, 34p to 280p and CMG, 23p to £15.77. Moving against the trend, MSW Technology stood out with a rise of 15p to 135p.

Aradis continued to hit

new depths with a fall of 5p to 56p. Earlier this week Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, underlined the Top Shop and Burton retailer, with a profit downgrade. Yesterday it was joined by ABN Amro Hoare Govett, which is reckoned to have reduced its profit numbers by 20 per cent.

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New York (midday):	
New Jones	5261.71 (+58.44)
S&P Composite	1235.06 (+6.96)
Tokyo:	
nikkei Average	1322.74 (-13.15)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	3881.03 (+61.05)
Amsterdam:	
AXP Index	559.51 (+7.58)
Sydney:	
ASX	2915.6 (-17.0)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	3525.91 (+1.55)
Singapore:	
Straits	1386.24 (-13.07)
Brussels:	
BEL20	3079.70 (+32.45)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4200.76 (+63.28)
Zurich:	
SWX Gen	1419.70 (+10.90)
London:	
FTSE 100	3556.4 (+46.2)
FTSE 100	55882 (+78.8)
FTSE 250	40712 (+19.2)
FTSE 350	2809.5 (+38.1)
FTSE Emerging 100	2704.08 (+20.21)
FTSE Midcap 100	2722.30 (+33.65)
FTSE Fixed Interest	157.73 (-0.11)
FTSE Govt Secs	1162.5 (-0.20)
Baltic:	
Trade Weight	780.45
SEACOM	1055.55 (-0.05)
US	0.77100 (+0.0204)
EURO	0.87700 (-0.0133)
USDM	98.7 (-0.3)
London:	
FTSE 100	184.4 Nov (3.07%) Jan 1997 -100
FTSE 250	182.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1997 -100

## Walking on AirTouch

WITH a 14 per cent rise behind Vodafone this week (and since this column included it as a new year tip) it is tempting now to take profits. Starting the week at 976p, Vodafone was trading at 55 times forecast earnings per share for the year to next March. Now at £11.10, the shares trade on a multiple of 63 times. At such high levels it may not take much to say a share that mobiles do heighten cancer risks in users — to knock the cards over.

The sharp rise of Vodafone this year is easily explained. The excellent connection numbers published on Tuesday coupled with excitement yesterday about a possible merger with AirTouch, a 45 billion rival based in San Francisco. However, both bits of good news have downsides that the market has chosen to ignore. The vast majority of Vodafone's new customers are on "pre-pay" deals, and in revenue

terms these are neither as lucrative nor as reliable as the more established annual subscription contracts. Swallowing AirTouch, meanwhile, could cause serious indigestion.

But the bull argument still holds sway. Any new customers are better than no customers and once introduced to the convenience of mobile telephony, there is every chance some could become more remunerative. With regard to its overseas expansion ideas, Vodafone is blessed with foreign experience. It also has a canny alternative approach: buy AirTouch for its European exposure and sell off the American side.

There are precious few industries that have

as clearly visible growth potential as this one.

In Vodafone you also have a telecoms company that is profitable. The rating makes little

sense, but keep the faith for now.

## Abbot

ABBOT is heading down the right road in looking to merge with ProSafe of Norway but it may be paying a high toll for the privilege. Britain's North Sea oil services industry is at an important juncture. Exploration is being drastically curbed on Europe's continental shelf. With the oil price suddenly falling and the cost of finding and piping oil from the North Sea at \$12 a barrel, there is no margin in it. Unsurprisingly, the oil majors are seeking cheaper oil in the Gulf of Mexico and West Africa.

Companies such as Abbot

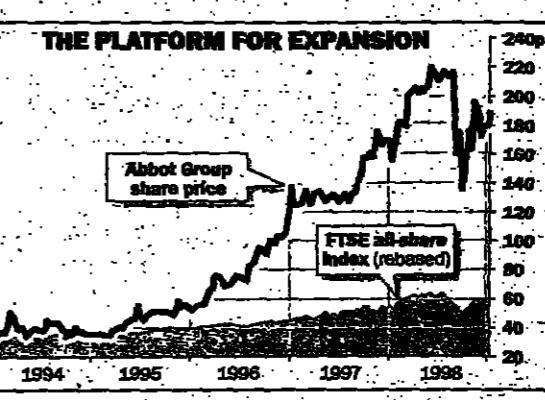
are doing fine working existing fields but it will increasingly confront the financial clout and expertise of America's oil service giants.

The links of BP Amoco and Exxon Mobil will be difficult and demanding customers too. The merger with ProSafe increases Abbot's services and puts more goods in

pond. The solution is to find work in more popular fields but it will increasingly confront the financial clout and expertise of America's oil service giants.

It could be strategy to smooth the merger pain but Abbot needs to drive a harder bargain with its new partner. The pampered Norwegian oil services industry cannot sit in

splendid isolation for long.



## Amey

AMEY has done well transforming itself. From being a tired old civil engineering company — perennially at the mercy of construction cycle vagaries — it has now moved into the much brighter business of building and maintaining buildings, roads and other infrastructure. It has also tapped into the current trend for outsourcing.

Cynics say that outsourcing turns a one-off capital expense into a medium-term revenue expense, flattening the look of the balance sheet in the process. This is true but businesses also like to outsource because it enables them to focus on their knitting. It is like employing an accountant to fill out your tax return: in terms of time spent you may be able to earn far more than it costs to hire the bean counter.

Its shares rose 44 per cent last year and there is every reason to believe the surge will continue. Buy.

## Centrica

AMERICAN makes worrying reading because it confirms that underwriting conditions in the Lloyd's insurance market are getting more difficult.

There is no unpleasant shock in Euclidian's interim results of the sort that spoilt the Cox party before Christmas, but in many ways it is more serious. Profits from un-

derwriting, according to Euclidian, will be between 5 and 7.5 per cent this year, down from 13 per cent.

In turn the worsening underwriting position could undermine Euclidian and other integrated Lloyd's vehicles.

The shares are sensibly valued by adding the net asset value to a multiple of underwriting earnings. This multiple will be low, because of the almost inevitable irregularity of that income. Euclidian's net assets — the assets used to back insurance risks — are 16p a share. Underwriting earnings per share are about 20p a share. But the Euclidian stock share fell yesterday from 214p to 119p.

Insurance companies always look like investment trusts with a potentially expensive hobby — insurance underwriting. But valued on this basis Euclidian shares are cheap, so long as it makes an underwriting profit. Buy.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

**E**conomic commentators are beginning to talk in quite dramatic terms about inflation and therefore interest rates. For many, Britain is well along a path that leads back to the low and stable inflation of the 1960s. Britain may not quite reach European interest rates of 3 per cent but could get pretty close — and that is where the UK decides to join the single currency or not.

Michael Saunders, of Salomon Brothers, puts a pretty compelling case for headline inflation to drop to close to zero this year to its lowest level since 1960. Underlying inflation, he believes, will fall to about 1.5 per cent late this year so long as oil prices do not recover. This would be the lowest underlying rate since 1967. This, he argues, means that base rates will fall to 5 per cent in the middle of this year and below 5 per cent in late 1999 or early 2000.

If British businesses and wage bargainers begin to believe that low inflation is a permanent or semi-permanent feature of the landscape, base rates could fall to

## Back to the Sixties but not swinging yet

4 per cent early in the new millennium. His forecasts do not rely on any assumption that monetary policy will be geared to providing sterling with a smooth glide path down to the euro some time after the next election but purely on a reading of economic trends. The main forces working in favour of low inflation include a sharp economic slowdown already under way that has left business with large piles of unsold stock and therefore presages deep discounting, as well as very weak commodity prices.

It might be added that the global growth outlook may look much worse than it does now if the American economy turns turtle. A new report by Bill Martin, of Phillips & Drew, and Professor Wynne Godley, of Cambridge University, argues that, in order to continue growing steadily, private spending would have to exceed income by the

equivalent of more than 8 per cent of gross domestic product, double the level of last year and considerably larger than the 6 per cent reached in the Lawson boom which led to a damaging bust. Debt would escalate to 2.4 times US annual income. Wall Street would have to inflate even further and the current account deficit would double. All of this is clearly unsustainable and the moment that America stops being the world's spender of last resort could be a devastating one.

The authors write: "Looking through the looking glass at America's wonderland, we conclude that should the stock market stop, it would instead fall over. A spiral, once virtuous, would become extremely vicious, bringing down the entire house of cards. We cannot time this pattern of events but we are convinced of its inevitability." The cumulative cost to the

world economy by 2003 in terms of lost growth could be in the order of 5 per cent of global GDP. This study believes that Britain and Europe would be least badly affected by such events but, nevertheless, in an era of evidently low inflation, it does provide a strong intuitive reason for central bankers to err on the side of growth.

In the minutes of the December MPC meeting, it became evident in a long passage on the subject

that the committee has begun to discuss a so-called neutral interest rate designed neither to stimulate nor restrain the economy.

Opinion was clearly divided (not least on whether the neutral rate is a useful concept for policymaking) on where the neutral rate lies. Unhelpfully for those of us trying to predict where base rates will end up, the variety of MPC opinion put the neutral rate at anywhere between 4.5 per cent and 6.5 per cent.

However, there is a camp on the MPC that believes not only that the neutral rate is significantly below the 6.75 per cent base rate that prevailed before December's half-point cut but also that base rates should currently be set below that neutral rate.

David Mackie, of JP Morgan, who has, beyond the call of duty, looked at the evidence of the past 170 years, concludes that a neutral

rate for Britain would be about 4.5 per cent. All of this suggests that there is scope for UK base rates to fall to levels not seen for a generation. It does not, however, make a cast iron case for a cut tomorrow.

Among the arguments for waiting a month are uncertainty about how the January sales have gone; some evidence that the recent decline in sterling is arresting the drop in exports; a concern not to be the odd man out in cutting rates

when the Fed and the European Central Bank are on hold and nervousness about another cut undermining sterling in the potentially volatile first weeks of trading in the euro. When in doubt, the MPC has sometimes waited to go through the full analytical process involved in publishing its quarterly *Inflation Report* before coming to a decision on rates — and the next report is in February.

## Oil-rich Nigeria battles to emerge from its crumbling economy

**Brian Wilson explains why Britain must encourage democracy in 'new' country**

**T**HE enigma of Nigeria is summed up in the queues, hundreds of yards long, for petrol at every filling station in Lagos and Abuja. Here is a country, easily capable of producing two million barrels of oil a day, which cannot supply its own people with enough fuel to keep their cars running.

There are plenty of explanations. The oil refineries are clapped-out and desperately in need of investment. Civil strife in the Delta area is significantly undermining oil production. But more fundamentally, this is a rich country that has been robbed and mismanaged for so long that the cupboard is finally just about bare.

So why lead a trade mission now, when perceptions of Nigeria as an economic basket case remain strong? The answer lies in the fact that political change is in the process of happening. As yet the outcome is uncertain. But there is a real, unmistakable determination to make it work and if that can be achieved, then economic transformation might not be far behind.

We should know within months whether the transition to democratic government has been successful. In February, there will be elections both for a national assembly and to choose a president. You can never be certain in Nigeria, but the indications are that these will go ahead and a new administration will be in place by May.

The transitional Government is led by General Abubakar who has no intention of standing for the presidency — a useful starting point in any such process. Abubakar has assembled an impressive team of ministers who are at pains to make it clear that they are on very short-term contracts. Their job is to hand over as stable a society and as secure an economy as possible to their elected successors.

These objectives mean that purely marking time until May is not an option. The appalling regime of General



Tony Blair welcomes General Abubakar to Downing Street during his visit last September

goodwill are to be capitalised upon. And they have shown themselves willing to grasp the nettle. When I met Alhaji Usman, the Minister of Finance, he gave a clear undertaking that the dual exchange rate — a blatant scam that offers a huge competitive advantage to those who are in a position to exploit naira-dollar conversion — would be abolished.

Now that has happened. This was an act of courage as it threatened the vested interests of powerful individuals.

On the other hand, many issues still need to be addressed. There is the uncomfortable fact that Transparency International, the research group, has consistently placed Nigeria at the bottom of its Corruption Perceptions index. It would go a long way towards encouraging investor confidence if the Nigerian Government was seen to take a definite stand to pro-

mote transparency and discourage corruption.

The UK's Export Credit Guarantee Department has had its fingers burnt over the past 20 years it has extended more than £3 billion, and there must be some indication of how inroads will be made into that debt. But the Nigerian are well aware of these difficulties and appear determined to address them quickly — not least in order to get

humour." His poisonous views on restaurants are well known from his column in *The Sunday Times*. It is hard not to warm to someone who believes the British public are being ripped off every time they open a table napkin, and he intends to say so at the lecture on February 4.

"We're the most inhospitable people in the world," he tells me — appropriately, from the Caribbean. "The English are just mugs when it comes to accepting bad service and then fuming about it afterwards."

In fact, the real reason the story will never appear is more fundamental. Any member of the eastenders cast mis-sold a pension is more likely to solve the problem by taking a sawn-off shotgun to the head office of the firm responsible than by writing a letter to the FSA.

The next few months are likely to tell us a lot about whether a democratic future really does exist and, if so, what it amounts to. It is a process we must encourage.

**□ The author is the Minister for Trade. He led a delegation, including representatives from Shell, SmithKline Beecham and Standard Chartered, to Nigeria in December.**

Incidentally, I hear there is serious talk of introducing a pensions mis-selling storyline into *EastEnders*, the same way that *The Archers* occasionally lectures us on warbley. However, a colleague points out that it is unlikely any of the cast declare enough income to fund a personal pension.

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**MARTIN WALLER**



R.U. OWED?

### BUSINESS LETTERS

#### Pound is being made a scapegoat for the misfortunes of pig-farmer

**From Mr Gerry Hanson**  
Sir, it really won't do for Fraser Nelson to blame the misfortunes of pig-farmer Donald Ross on the so-called strength of the pound (The euro and me, December 24). The market price of pigs has nothing to do with the exchange rate, and everything to do with the EU policy of encouraging rearing of pigs to over-supply, plus the fact that most EU countries have much lower, and therefore cheaper, standards of animal welfare than we have. Mr Ross may be guilty of failing to research the market before switching from cereal production, or just unfortunate in timing, but he cannot legitimately blame the pound.

The pound is not strong. Would that it were — there are great benefits in a strong currency: lower food, raw materi-

al, packaging and freight costs, and potential for lower fuel costs if our greedy Government stopped exploiting the benefit by constantly raising fuel tax. Twenty-five years ago when we entered the EEC, we had a small trade surplus with other EEC members; now we have an annual deficit with our EU partners in excess of £8 billion. Then, for a German to buy a pound's worth of British goods, he had to withdraw from his bank DM825; now, he need take out only DM280. Is that strong? Anyway, can anyone name a single Western country that prospered for long with a weak currency? Yours faithfully,

**GERRY HANSON**,  
Potters Lodge,  
74A Slough Road,  
Iver Heath,  
Buckinghamshire, SL20 0DY.

#### Interest swings and tax roundabouts

**From Mr A. D. Gatling**  
Sir, Janet Bush, in her interesting piece on interest rates (January 5) points out that the difference between our rates and those of euroland is unlikely to be maintained. More durable, however, is likely to be the difference in tax rates.

At an overall 35 per cent here, compared with an average of 45 per cent on the Continent, we would lose 15 per cent of after-tax income if we were forced to "harmonise" our tax

rates, against which any temporary saving on mortgages is small.

Indeed, one wonders whether this may be the chief attraction of EMU to Mr Blair. Once signed up, he would then be able to renege on his election promise not to raise taxes by claiming *force majeure*.

Yours faithfully,  
**A. D. GATLING**,  
White Lodge,  
Berwick St James,  
Salisbury, SP1 4TZ.

#### Background to Berisford pay

**From the Chairman of the Remuneration Committee, Berisford plc, City Diaries**  
Sir, City Diary (December 17) wrongly suggested that Berisford's chief executive enjoyed a big pay increase last year despite a fall in the group's profits. In 1998, profits before tax and exceptional — the best guide to performance — rose 36 per cent and earnings per share 30 per cent, although a £24.9 million exceptional profit on the repurchase of loan stock in the previous year did have the effect that profits at

the pre-tax level were down 17 per cent year-on-year.

Your report of November's results dealt with this correctly. In the past four years, underlying earnings per share have increased four-fold. Mr Bowker's bonus was genuinely performance-related.

Yours faithfully,  
**PENNY HUGHES**,  
Chairman,  
Remuneration Committee,  
Berisford plc,  
1 Baker Street,  
London, W1M 1AA.

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## Ship comes in

**BOB GOODALL**, co-ordinator at SOBS, the pressure group devoted to keeping our building societies, has had to part with a family heirloom to secure funds needed to disrupt the Halifax takeover of the Birmingham Midshires.

Next week, Bonhams will auction a painting left to him by his late father, Sir Ldr Bill Goodall. *Ship entering the Thames estuary* by the marine artist Norman Wilkinson is of... any way, it is expected to raise between

**A DAFT linguistic debate over the euro in all places, Moscow, where the authorities have deemed the currency officially sexist.**

**In European languages where they have to decide one way or the other, the euro is a bouncing boy — "un euro", "der euro", etc. In Russian, "евро" should be neuter. But the local media have had it swinging both ways, either masculine or feminine. So the central bank, sensing controversy, has reverted to Stalinist ways. "There is no official decision," said a spokesman.**

**Caught out**

**THE** approach for AirTouch seems to have caught Chris Gent, Vodafone chief executive, in the out field. He is on holiday in Australia watching the cricket because the company is the England team's sponsor.

He has been there since December 26 and is expected back on Monday.

Lord MacLennan of Knebworth, Vo-

## THE TIMES CITY DIARY



### dadore's chairman, is head of the Eng-

land and Wales Cricket Board, and Gent himself is apparently mad keen

on the sport.

Vodafone concedes that it is not terri-

bly convenient to have your chief execu-

tive on the other side of the world

during what is potentially the compa-

ny's biggest deal. However, the mobile phone network works in Australia

extremely well. I am told.

### Death wish

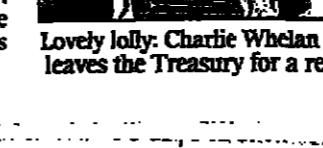
**THE** annual Savoy Lecture on the hos-

pitality industry is usually addressed by a bigwig hotelier or whatever. But this year Arena, the organisers have gone for the film-maker Michael Winter. Winter assures me he was the industry's own choice — "they're either masochistic or they have a sense of

### Free Whelan

**MY** PICTURE is of Charlie Whelan, spin-doctor turned ice-cream salesman, in the new publicity campaign by the Financial Services Authority on pensions mis-selling. Seriously, those at the FSA who have seen the commercial say the resemblance is breathtaking. Look out for it.

### R.U. OWED?



"Hand over an account application form and nobody will get hurt..."

**THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE**

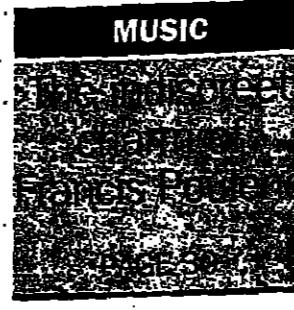


## POP

Will Benioff  
Setzer swing  
into the charts  
PAGE 29

## THE TIMES

## ARTS



## MUSIC

# A date with the end of the world

**FILM:** This year movie-makers are jumping on the millennium bandwagon, says James Mottram

From the predictions of Nostradamus to the Y2K bug, millennial angst has struck deep. With more than 2,000 books published on the subject since the 1950s, uncertainty and insecurity appear to govern most of the thinking surrounding the millennium. And the malaise has started to infiltrate our cinemas.

Apart from Kathryn Bigelow's 1995 film *Strange Days*, which depicted anarchy on the streets of Los Angeles on December 31, 1999, few film-makers have so far attempted to represent millennial fears. But now a glut of films is on the way to guide — or frighten — us towards the millennium. And the world has never looked more unstable, on celluloid at least.

First up is Darren Aronofsky's brash, low-budget debut *Requiem for a Nun*, a near-future piece of prophetic madness. Not strictly a millennium film, it nonetheless harnesses an impending sense of millennial paranoia through its protagonist, the reclusive mathematician Max (Sean Gullette). Max is being pursued by Wall Street brokers and Hasidic Jews, both convinced that the numerical code he has uncovered can unlock the stock market and Kabalistic texts respectively.

Aronofsky, who does not subscribe to an end-of-the-world hysteria, envisages the end of the century as a surreal-

‘On the cinema screen, at least, the world is doomed’

each film co-founded by the French company ARTÉ, the collection was initiated by producers Caroline Benioff and Carole Scotta, the latter responsible for the Flemish filmmaker Alain Berliner's 1997 debut *Ma Vie en Rose*. Berliner is one of the directors called on to meditate on the impending date with *The Wall*, his magical realist examination of Belgium's cultural, linguistic and political boundaries.

Benioff sees the body of work as a shared set of visions. With films representing five continents, including Abderrahmane Sissako's examination of exile in Africa (*Life on Earth*), the collective view-

istic distortion, inspired by his childhood. “No matter how much we laugh at the apocalypse and millennial fever, I think some of us have nightmares about it,” he says. “As a kid I saw Orson Welles's documentary about Nostradamus. It was about how this mad guy from the Middle East would nuke New York City in 1999. So growing up there I was always terrified of the millennium.”

While it can also be read as a universal expression of our fears of technology, other films have used the millennium as a reference point for examining contemporary culture at the end of the 20th century. *2000 Seen By* is an international anthology of ten films devoted to the millennium. With

*Strange Days*, one of the first films to deal with the new millennium

point appears to be pessimistic reflection. “The millennium doesn't mean anything any more,” argues Benioff, who partly initiated the project as a response to the growing delirium surrounding the date. “My life isn't going to change in 2000, and everybody knows that. I think we're all going to perceive it as the beginning of one thing and the end of another. It's time for you to say ‘Well, this is what I think we did with ourselves, our lives, our culture.’ If you see it under this light, each film says something of what it means to finish the 20th century.”

Other culturally specific films in *2000 Seen By* bear this

out. Indie king Hal Hartley's tête-à-tête between Christ and the Devil in *New York City: The Book of Life*, is a controversial retelling of the Book of Revelation, with an ironic swipe at Big Apple life. Tsai Ming-Liang's examination of personal and political insecurity, *The Hole*, is an environmental warning sign about the accelerated decay of his country, Taiwan.

*Midnight*, the Brazilian Walter Salles's follow-up to his forthcoming *Central Station*, depicts the coming together of a murderer and a potential suicide case. As Salles points out, it reflects upon the limitations of his own country, a place

“that has declined into decadence without ever having peaked”.

**T**he most prominent film in *2000 Seen By* is the Canadian writer-director Don McKellar's *Last Night*. an apocalyptic look at the lives of several Toronto inhabitants on the eve of world destruction. First shown at the Cannes Film Festival when *Armageddon* and *Deep Impact* were similarly predicting global meltdown, McKellar's film is less sensationalist.

“I thought of the practical implications of the event,” says McKellar, whose film de-

picts people performing last-chance acts — from bizarre sex to reliving family yuletides gone by. “It's one thing to think, ‘I'd fly to Paris and climb the Eiffel Tower.’ The chances are you wouldn't get that flight; not many pilots would be flying on their last day. I wanted to stick with people who built systems to protect themselves and decided to carry on regardless.”

Metaphysical or practical, independent directors appear unable to get past the notion that the world is facing its demise. As Benioff points out: “Each film-maker had difficulty going over the date. Very few of them talked about Janu-

ary 1 in the year 2000. Not so for Hollywood, which has nimbly jumped on the millennium bandwagon. Written by the creators of *The X-Files*, *The Mark* is set to star Will Smith, saving the Earth once again as the planets align at the end of 2001 to rip us apart.”

Like Benioff, Mellor sees her film as an opportunity to reflect on what has happened and will happen in the world around us, but without scaremongering. “There's a lot of fear around. I can't imagine for one minute planes will drop out of the sky. We watch too much sci-fi. I can't imagine all these horrendous things are going to happen. We can put people on the Moon; surely we can deal with a few figures changing.”

• opens on Friday



Bleak vision: Riot police are on the streets of Los Angeles on New Year's Eve 1999 in Kathryn Bigelow's 1995 *Strange Days*, one of the first films to deal with the new millennium

## In the lap of arthouse luxury

Arthouse filmgoers have never been so popular. They are being brought in from the cold — not to mention the dingy, draughty and often smelly — to the luxurious, to multiplexes with special auditoriums and programmes shaped to their taste.

Warner Village Cinemas is offering them theatres with large screens and digital sound, where their leather seats recline at the touch of a button, where popcorn and Coke give way to sushi and champagne brought to their individual tables and individual ice buckets. Meanwhile, in partnership with City Screen, Mayfair Entertainment, owner of the Curzon cinemas, has gambled more than £2 million to eschew mainstream programming in its Shaftesbury Avenue cinema for a three-screen arthouse.

The new Curzon Soho is open from 8am, providing the kind of comfortable, clubby feel that the National Film Theatre had in mind for its proposed West End presence before it had to drop its plans. There is a street-level bar serving coffee, beer, sandwiches, magazines and gossip, a basement bistro-style cafe which doubles as an art gallery, and programming on three screens that covers the arthouse spectrum from nostalgia (such as Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, in the current programme) to cult (like *Imamura's The Eel*).

Thanks to multiplexes, the 52 million UK cinema admissions of 1994 have climbed to 130 million — but without any serious analysis of who the filmgoers are, or what they want. Now cinema owners are only waking up to the fact that their audiences have grown up, they're realising that they are wealthier, too.

After years of neglect, discerning filmgoers are being wooed with soft seats and sushi, Simon Tait discovers



Melbourne's Jam Factory — “the most successful cinema in Australia” — sets the UK pattern

“People who go to arthouse films care about the environment in which they see their choice of movies, and there is a growth in older audiences,” says Mayfair's chief executive, Marc Vlessing. “But we can't afford to commit a single screen for specialist films, so we can open a new release in the bigger 249-seat auditorium and then move it to the smaller 130-seat or 110-seat one to give the film a proper season. We are serving a neighbourhood. Soho, and we intend to open more designed for the neighbourhoods they're in. A lot of people are coming here during the day to meet people and have a drink without seeing a movie at all. There's an ageing audience in a younger market, and we're in danger of leaving them behind.” Does it work? Officially, Curzon says it's too early to tell other than that there's been a “transformation” in ticket sales since they opened early in October, but insiders say they're selling as many tickets in a day as they were in a week.

Warner Village, the new kid on the high street, now has 22 multiplexes in Britain and will more than double that in three years. Among the develop-

ments it is about to announce is a 16-screen multiplex, for Nottingham, on the site of the old *Evening Post*. Two of the auditoriums will be Europa Screens, dedicated to what Warner Village — a partnership for the UK between Warner Brothers and the Australian Village Roadshow — prefers to call “non-mainstream” rather than arthouse, with a bar situated at the filmgoer devoted to subtitles. Two will be VIP Screens, the offspring of a highly successful Australian multiplex. Multiplexes were becoming production lines for feeding teenagers action movies, but there is another dimension to the audience.”

“We're offering more bang for your buck, catering for an audience that is cash-rich and time-poor,” Jeffries says. “It's not about elitism, it's about aspiration. People will pay more for the extra service in the VIP auditorium where the fuss of getting food and drink is sorted for them, and we also believe that you should be able to watch foreign-language or non-mainstream movies in a classy, European ambience.”

Multiplexes were becoming production lines for feeding teenagers action movies, but there is another dimension to the audience.”

## Clunk that clicks

## THEATRE



Nyree Dawn Porter does her best to fizz as Coward's Carlotta

Yet Maughan's predicament was also that of Coward, Ramigan, and several other writers impelled by prejudice and a nannyish censor to translate homosexuality into heteroerotic experience. It is a piece in which, emboldened by the spirit of the mid-1960s, the ageing Coward directly confronted the great unpublicised truth of his life. In the person of Sir Hugo Latymer, dramatist and novelist, he wrote directly about the predicament of the homosexual for whom fame and fortune mattered more, much more than emotional candour.

But note that word, “predicament”. Latymer is not a self-portrait, nor is *Song at Twilight* quite the confessional play some hold it to be. I don't know why Sheridan Morley, who is Coward's biographer as well as director of the highly competent staging at the King's Head, says in the programme he has “never quite believed” the author's claim that he based the play on *Somerset Maugham*. Latymer lacks Coward's grace, kindness and wit, and has spent his life flaunting a spurious heterosexuality, not least by making the sort of loveless marriage that would have morally disgusted Coward. That suggests Maugham, Maugham and Maugham again.

“We've offered more bang for your buck, catering for an audience that is cash-rich and time-poor,” Jeffries says. “It's not about elitism, it's about aspiration. People will pay more for the extra service in the VIP auditorium where the fuss of getting food and drink is sorted for them, and we also believe that you should be able to watch foreign-language or non-mainstream movies in a classy, European ambience.”

## A master from the N

## VISUAL ART

## John

## A master from the N

## John

## Count's lady sings the blues

**T**he story goes that Carmen Bradford brought herself to the attention of her most celebrated employer, Count Basie, and suggested that he would be missing out if he didn't hire her to sing with his early-1930s orchestra. Her chutzpah paid off: she stayed nine years with the band, winning two Grammies along the way, and subsequently launched herself on a solo career so successful that Hollywood has reportedly taken out an option on her life story.

It was thus a little surprising to hear her confess to being nervous about her first appearance at Ronnie Scott's, particularly since she treats her audience with the formidable combination of strident heckling and intimate teasing pioneered by the likes of her countrywomen Oprah Winfrey and Ricki Lake.

Such nerves were in any case thoroughly banished by the time Bradford had romped through her opening number, *Then There Eyes*. Hers is a nonsense, attention-grabbing voice well-suited to familiar up-tempo boppers such as this, and with a near-assertive trio — pianist John Rangel, bassist Orlando Le Fleming, drummer Mark Fletcher — providing solid propulsion, she was quickly into her considerable stride.

A strong but soulful visit to *Maybe September* was personalised by being preceded by the assertion that Bradford's mother — also a singer — made her do her chores to it; a skintight scatting version of *Mr Paginini* sparked off a string of self-deprecating anecdotes.

## JAZZ

about the number of people — including her father, the trumpeter Bobby Bradford — who had warned her not to tread on ground hallowed by Ella.

It is belated material, though, that provides a sing-along test: Bradford's controlled glide through the melancholy end-of-relationship lament *Where Do You Start?*, while not quite reaching the emotional depths explored in Shirley Horn's version, nevertheless provided a highly effective contrast to such greasy, R&B-laced fare as *It Ain't No Use*, and her quietly contemplative *Young and Foolish* brought out all the song's melodic nostalgia without undue sentimentality.

Bradford's forte, however — unsurprisingly, given the Basie outfit's legendary aptitude in the form — is the blues. Her closing number, a loose, raunchy celebration of the medium, consequently enabled her to showcase all her considerable talents: her voice swooped and soared; brightly inventive scatting sections jolted appealingly with vigorous emotional outbursts and sudden ejaculations. By the time she had brought the number to an end with a powerful "That's all", Bradford had achieved her aim: an exuberant crowd had been audiably uplifted.

CHRIS PARKER

## GREAT BRITISH HOPES

### Rising stars in the arts firmament

SIMONE REBELLO

Age: 21

Profession: Percussionist. She is the founder member of Backbeat, a percussion quartet which has built up a strong reputation over the past three years. You can hear them at the Purcell Room on February 2 or on their self-titled CD. What's unusual about Backbeat's rhythmic method? Instead of just standing behind drums, marimbas and music stands, Rebello and her three male colleagues roam the stage, sing, and use bass-kettles and their own bodies as instruments. "I wanted to make percussion more theatrical."

Basketballs? "The lads are into basketball and play in rehearsals. We wondered if we could incorporate the game into our concerts and quartet member Damien Harris created *Rebounds*, in which two of us drum and the others pick up the rhythm by bouncing basketballs on the stage."

Repertoire? "There's a lack of good quartet percussion music, so we write a lot ourselves. We also play work by people like John Cage and Steve Reich."

Base drums: She first picked up sticks as a schoolgirl in Croydon. "There was a very strong woodwind tradition and I dutifully signed up for the flute. But after a year on the waiting list, I thought 'This is never going to happen' and went along to percussion with a friend."

Fiction: She won two percussion prizes at the Royal Northern College, in Manchester. "My tutors — Graham Johns, Ian Wright and Dave Hassell — were very influential. Seven years after graduating, if I'm in a fix I still go to them."

Why does her Portuguese surname sound familiar? She is a first cousin of the acclaimed jazz pianist Jason Rebello.

The Backbeat motto? "There's nothing we wouldn't do in a concert."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL



Soon, on a worldwide stage near you: Big Bad Voodoo Daddy will have an audience of hundreds of millions when they entertain football fans at America's Super Bowl later this month

## What daddy-o did in the war

POP: Stand by your zoot suits, the big bands are back — and jumping.

Nigel Williamson on the Forties sound that's hot in the Nineties

**O**n the floor of New York's Hammerstein Ballroom zoot suits and flared skirts abound. Dances such as the lindy hop and the jitterbug, scarcely seen in half a century, are being executed with immaculate precision and flamboyant skill. On stage the Brian Setzer Orchestra, with its 13-piece brass section, all of them dressed in green suits behind matching orchestra desks, is blaring out a mixture of swing, jump and live as if Cab Calloway and Louis Jordan had never gone away. At the bar the only drink to be seen sipping is a fruit-flavoured martini complete with umbrella. It may be 1999 but it seems that swing is the thing once again.

"It's a reaction to years of grunge," says Jason Moss of Cherry Poppin' Daddies from Oregon, who have sold a million albums in America and made a big impact on their first visit to Britain last year. The prevailing sound has been very dark and introspective for a long time. People are tired of that and want something more exuberant."

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy were perhaps the first to draw attention to the swing revival when they appeared in Jon Favreau's 1996 hit movie, *Swingers*. "We're coming from a jump sound, from people like Louis Armstrong, who played music that was more raw, more rocking than traditional swing," says singer and guitarist Scotty Moore. "I've never thought of our music as retro. Swing was originally like punk rock, the early primitive stuff, that big band mambo with

people dancing in the aisles before it became polished and clean and tame. What we do is wild and swinging Forties music with a Nineties twist."

All are agreed that the swing revival has no future if it just sets out to replicate the sound of the past.

**• Swing was like punk rock, the early primitive stuff, that big band mambo with people dancing in the aisles •**

copy what they did 50 years ago it's not going to be bad, but it is doing it just the same," says Setzer who, as the former leader of rockabilly revivalists the Stray Cats already had a reputation as an inventive musical archaeologist. "To make the music viable you have to make it new and you have to make it your own. That's why the Stray Cats were successful in the Eighties. Other rockabilly bands were stuck in 1956. We gave it a new

took off." The orchestra is due in Britain in March.

Most of the new generation of swing musicians are not teenage hopefuls but thirtysomethings disillusioned with the banality of much modern rock music. Steve Perry, 34, of the Cherry Poppin' Daddies, says: "Swing bands are the antithesis of all those tired rock clichés. It's less tortured. There is no reason why swing can't be a viable modern music. Does it all have to be angst? When Count Basie got out there and smiled and the band was all brassy, it felt like a warm day and everything was going to be all right. What's wrong with that? Swing is probably addressing some kind of need in people right now."

Robert Austin, Britain's leading promoter of swing and a former dance champion himself, agrees. His club nights attract huge crowds, many of them dressed in full Forties costume. "When the Cherry Poppin' Daddies came to play in London I thought it was the best thing I had seen since the Jam in 1979," he says. "Swing in Britain is really exciting. We've seen what has happened in America and I'm sure exactly the same is going to happen here. It's a wave and you can either ride it or get very wet."

• *The Dirty Boogie* by the Brian Setzer Orchestra and *Zoot Suit Riot* by Cherry Poppin' Daddies are both released by Universal Records. *Big Bad Voodoo Daddy's* album will be released in the spring

VISUAL ART: In Venice, John Russell Taylor stands stunned by the contradictory wisdom of the Ancients

## A masterclass from the Mayas

**I** magine a civilisation so sophisticated that it could still give us pointers on the measurement of time and the movement of heavenly bodies, and yet one whose technology did not include the wheel, and whose graphic art knew nothing of perspective. Add the fact that all its remains offer no unequivocal evidence of humour, and seem to exclude completely the gentler feelings of love and tenderness. Some-thing on another planet, maybe? Certainly that is where one often feels strange, one who has never felt so alienated. No belief in intervention from outer space is required to fit the Maya into the human race. It is just not quite the human race as we Indo-Europeans know it. It is a measure of the civilisational philosophical sophistication that it could comprehend and reconcile opposites without the slightest difficulty, while in Europe generations of philosophers struggled in vain, and struggle still. This may be the reason that for every allegorical assertion

about the Maya and what they did and did not do, did and did not know, there is always at least one glaring exception. We say they did not know the wheel, and for themselves they did not. But their children's toys often ran on

**• Throughout the show the shock of strangeness and of recognition recurs •**

wheels. We say that they never discovered perspective; and yet there is one obvious instance, in a ceiling painting from Bonampak, meticulously reconstructed for this show, where one side a wounded warrior sprawls up a flight of stairs with quite Mannerist abandon, in full perspective. Seven centuries before the Spanish conquest, it is almost as though they knew everything, but just chose not to bother with some. Even humour and tenderness may per-

haps be seen, although the only tender moment is in a small ceramic where a young woman delicately touches the face of a very old man, and we can only guess at humorous intent in some of the more grotesque figurines.

A large archaeological show like this should preferably satisfy both the specialist and the general public. For the experts in matters Mayan I have spoken to: the first criterion is well met: they are all ecstatic about the depth of the curators' researches; the astonishing way that if some tiny provincial museum in Mexico has just one outstanding piece, it has been tracked down and borrowed. At worst there are some quibbles about interpretation.

As far as the wider public is concerned, there can be no doubt whatever. If before entering you knew of the Maya only that they lived in Mexico before the conquest, you could rely on coming out with a clear insight into the history and a vivid feel for the nature of this remote and mysterious culture. Better still, you would have had an unforgettable aesthetic experience.

From that point of view,



A ceramic showing an anthropomorphic figure emerging from a flower, found at Jaina Island, Campeche, Mexico

fairly be said of some of its predecessors that they were fascinating in a Brain-of-Britain kind of way, but great art was a little thin on the ground.

Here, on the other hand, the simple, monumental design of Agata Toricella Crespi and her

team is perfectly calculated to show off the works included as things worth looking at in themselves, rather than as mere stages in a continuing historical argument.

And what wonders it offers the eye. Should one arrive by

water, the first thing one sees is the Chac Mool reclining figure in stone which so inspired Henry Moore that it set off the great series of reclining figures which were to preoccupy him for the next half a century. Whatever else, it serves to remind us that nothing in art is so remote that it cannot feed something of itself into our own aesthetic mindset.

**T**hroughout the show the shock of strangeness and simultaneously of recognition recurs. The grander temple sculptures of gods and priests still seem decidedly stolid, but at the same time stagger us with their totally confident grasp of contained yet dynamic form. From the largest stone sculpture to the smallest ceramic, one cannot but be impressed with the Mayan sense of proportion, their ability to combine obsessively intricate detail with a daringly simple grasp of the whole to which the detail must ultimately be subordinated.

The show's other big surprise is the richness and variety of the colours in Mayan life and art. Most of even the largest carvings seem to have been brilliantly painted, while the pictures on plates and vessels, the reconstructed murals and the illuminations in manuscripts (represented by photographs, since the originals are too delicate to travel) all testify to the abundant life which surrounded and contained the Mayan obsession with death — very much as it does in modern Mexico.

• *Maya, Palazzo Grassi, San Sam-*

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

Court of Appeal

Law Report January 6 1999

LAW 31

Court of Appeal

## Lender can take possession with no order

Ropegaelach v Barclays Bank

Before Lord Justice Henry, Lord Justice Chadwick and Lord Justice Clarke

Judgment December 18

A mortgage lender was entitled to exercise its common law right to take possession of a mortgaged dwelling house without first obtaining a court order. The protection provided to the borrower by section 1 of the Administration of Justice Act 1970 only applied where the lender had brought an action for possession.

The Court of Appeal so held in a recent judgment dismissing an appeal by the borrower, Seán Óg Ógáelach, against the decision of Mr Justice Longmore on 14/10/97 in the Swansea Division of the Queen's Bench Division, upholding the striking out of Deputy District Judge Ellis of his action against the defendant, Barclays Bank plc, for determination that the bank had been entitled to take possession of his home and sell it without having first obtained a court order.

Section 36 of the 1970 Act provides:

"Where the mortgagee brings an action in which he claims possession, the court may—

(a) adjourn the proceedings, or

(b) make an order, for delivery of

possession of the mortgaged property;

(c) stay or suspend execution

of the judgment or order."

Anthony Scrivener, QC and

Mistorman Joss for the borrower;

Ms Elizabeth Glotter, QC and

Mr Michael Sullivan for the bank.

DR JUSTICE CHADWICK

Summarised the appeal raised a point

of the importance as to the effect

if, of section 36 of the 1970 Act

where a lender had taken posses-

sion of mortgaged property by

peaceable entry and without first

obtaining an order of the court.

It had been unnecessary for the

judge to decide whether the bank

had, in fact, gone into possession of

the borrower's house and the court

had to approach the appeal on the

basis that that question of fact had

not been resolved.

Section 36 was expressed as ap-

plication where a lender had taken

possession of the mortgaged property.

Where the conditions in subsection (3) were satisfied the court was

given powers, by subsection (2),

which could fairly be described as

procedural, in the sense that they

were only capable of being exercis-

ed in the context of existing pro-

ceedings in which a claim for pos-

session was made.

It was plain that section 36 had

been enacted in order to deal with

the problem which had arisen fol-

lowing *Camerons* and which had

been the subject of consideration

in *Reynolds v City of London*

Real Property Co [1922] 1 KB 49,

and *Cruise v Terrell* [1922] 1 KB

664.

Those decisions provided no sup-

port for the borrower's contention

that section 36 of the 1970 Act

should be given a construction

on the language used, it could not

be properly construed as procedural

in the sense that they were only

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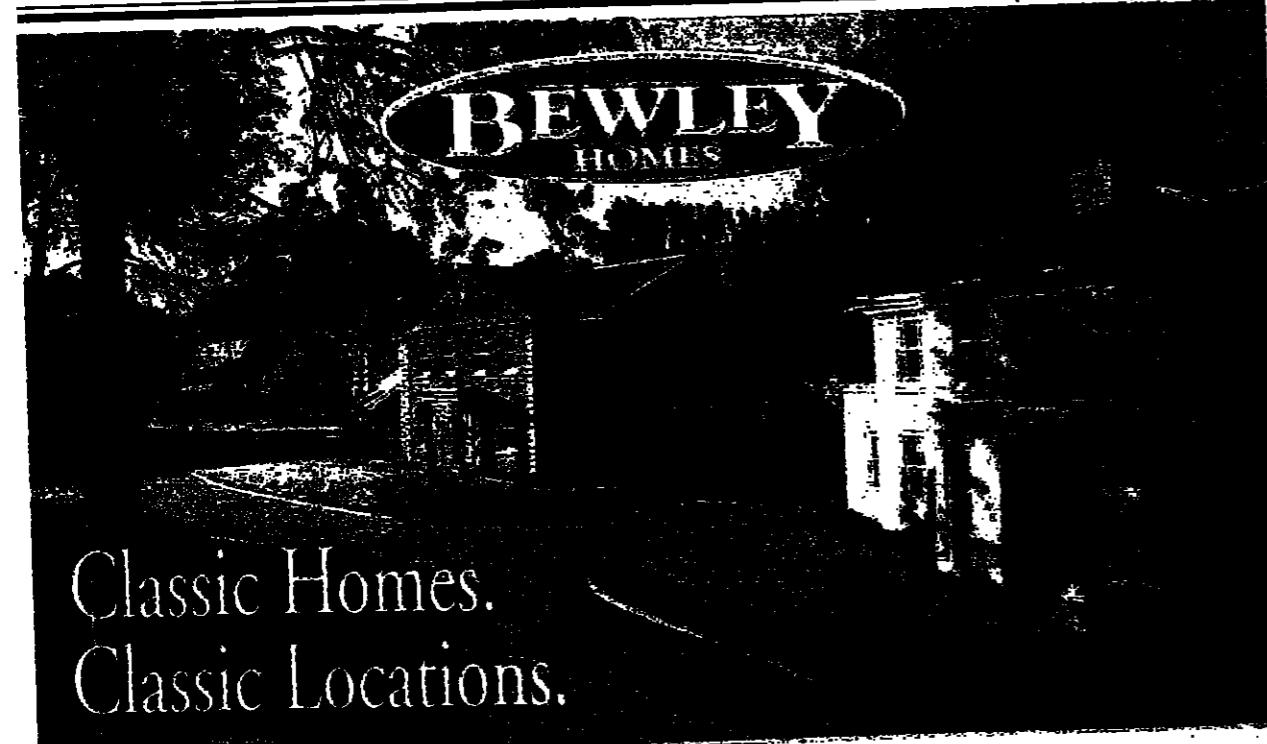
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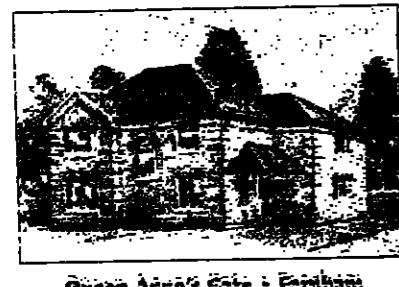
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Rachel Kelly reports on the proposal for the Land Registry that will end the property price guessing game

# Your biggest investment is no longer a secret

**D**inner parties will never be the same again. Henceforth, we may be able to know the price that sellers originally paid for their houses and the putative profit that they could enjoy.

Such juicy figures and an intimate knowledge of our neighbour's bank balance will fuel our national obsession with house prices and the joys of making more money by watching the wallpaper than by going out to work.

Ministers are expected to announce shortly that henceforth the Land Registry, the government body that records property transactions, will soon include the price paid for a property alongside details of its registered title, mortgage and conveyancing.

Potential buyers could apply for a copy of the title, or if they have online access via the Land Registry direct access service, view the entry from a computer.

The reforms are part of Labour's manifesto commitment to freedom of information, and have been the subject of discussion since 1988 in the run-up to the opening of the Land Registry to the public in 1990.

They are also part of the Government's wider aim to reform the housebuying process, which is currently the subject of a consultation paper at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions. Providing such information could be included in a logbook or sellers' pack to be assembled by sellers before putting a property on the market.

Should the reform be implemented, England and Wales will mirror the Scottish system where property prices have been a matter of public record since 1617.

**Anything that demystifies the housebuying process is a good thing. It will make valuation easier**

agents whose clients are obsessed with confidentiality clauses bears witness to the desire for secrecy about what is for many their biggest financial transaction.

Many lawyers still oppose the reforms, and have been lobbying the Lord Chancellor's Department to make their views known. So do some agents, such as David Parry, from Cruttons Daniel Smith in Maidstone. Such an idea is an invasion of privacy, he says. "Property values can rise or fall in very

short periods of time. It may paint the wrong picture."

But most estate agents and surveyors have broadly welcomed the move and they are right to do so. The changes will see an end to inflated claims by irresponsible agents about how much a house is worth, only to win the commission for the sale.

Ultimately, says Guy Foster from Friend & Falcke, the London estate agents, the reforms will steady the housing market and restrain prices from galloping away from reality in an inflationary boom, which economists now agree has damaging effects on the wider economy.

More information in general leads to more efficiency and such figures would be useful in terms of tracking the reality of what is happening to actual prices, rather than relying on the research of commercial organisations such as the Halifax and the Nationwide Building Society. It would help, too, in fraud cases.

This should make the property market more efficient," says a spokesman for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, which has campaigned for change.

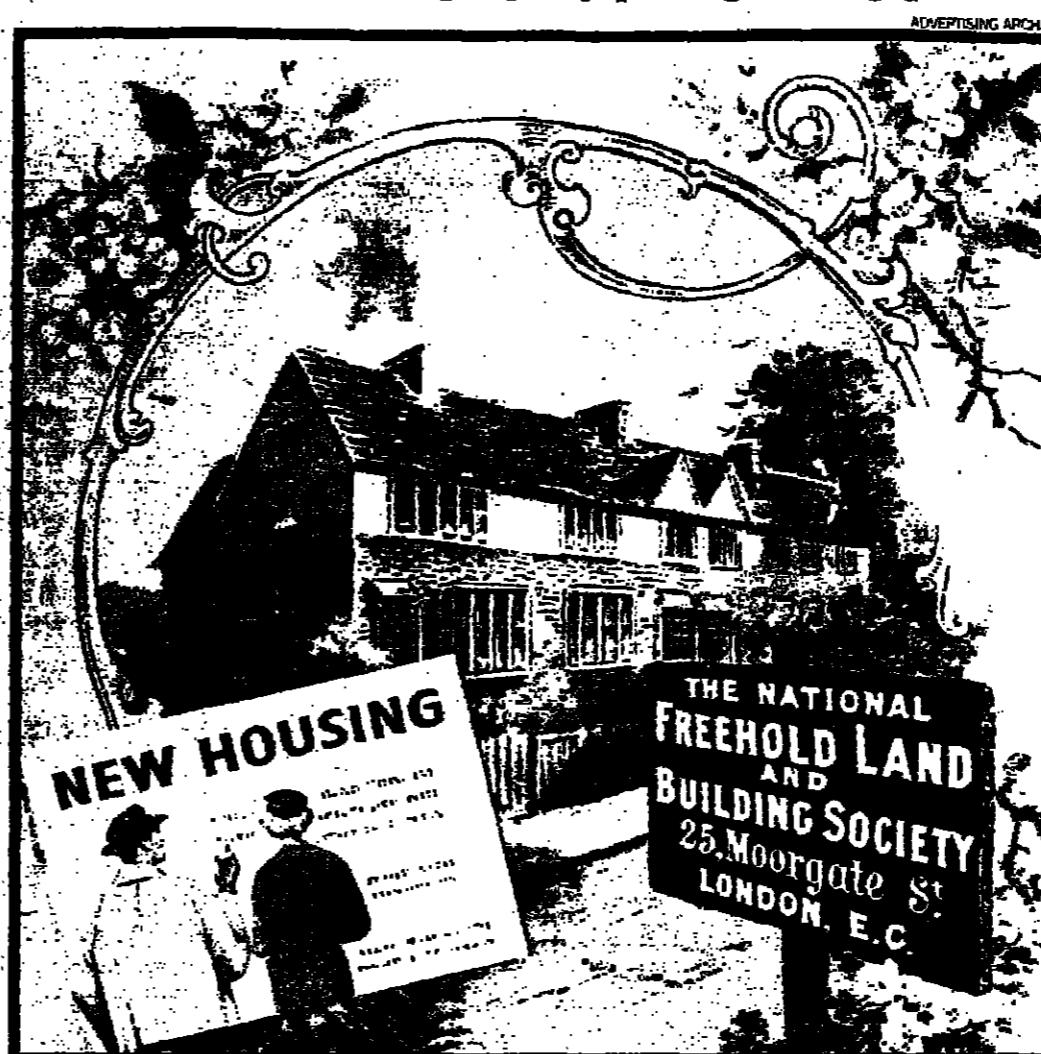
"Such information is already freely available in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and many European countries.

"The experience of openness in all of these countries is that personal and commercial privacy has not been compromised. Nor has the information been misused."

Willie Gething, from the buyers' agents Property Vision, says: "Anything that demystifies the housebuying process is a good thing. It will make valuations easier and will leave less room for economic

agents to play with."

Richard Lambert from the British Property Federation echoes con-



Those were the days: flashback to the time when homes could be bought for a few thousand pounds

guessing." Indeed, many switched-on buyers already try to find out as much about other sales in the area or the street in which they are interested, and such comparable sales are an essential element of the services provided by buying agents who do their best to assess values accurately.

But property experts also caution that the figures need to be used with care. Guy Foster notes that if a buyer can call up the Land Registry and find out all the house prices within the same street, this could complicate negotiations.

He says: "The Land Registry will not record the condition of a property, the size of rooms or its internal decorations."

Richard Lambert from the British Property Federation echoes con-

cerns that the information could be misleading. Finer details of sales such as rent-free periods or methods of payment such as share swaps do not have to be included.

To have to answer "yes" or "no" to the proposals is to oversimplify the issue, Mr Lambert argues. Rather he wishes to see the proposal, which does have merit, fine-tuned.

Willie Gething points to other complications. In the country, many homes are registered in two parts: for example a rectory might be registered separately from some land or a cottage. Government figures could be misleading.

He says: "They may read that there have been no property sales of more than £2 million in Wiltshire in the past year, whereas we

will know of maybe three or four sales. The reason is that the sales included land or outbuildings which were recorded separately from the main house."

Willie Gething notes, too, that there could be complications with leasehold extensions which mean that prices are not necessarily comparable.

He says: "A house sold with a 50-year lease a few years ago may now be for sale with an extended 75-year lease."

The message is that if prices are published, such figures need to be treated with caution.

The approach may not add to the gaiety of dinner parties, but should add to the efficiency of the more prosaic business of valuations.



□ **CHRIS EVANS**, the owner of Virgin Radio, has bought a flat in Wilton Crescent, SW1. The ground floor and basement flat was sold on a short lease for about £70,000.

□ **THE home of Sir Alan Glyn**, the late Conservative MP who was also a soldier, barrister, doctor and expert on international affairs, is being sold by Farley and Co for £3 million. Seventeen Cadogan Place, SW1, consists of a main house and mews house, both in need of refurbishment. According to Dickens in *Nicholas Nickleby*, Cadogan Place was the connecting link between the aristocratic pavements of Belgrave Square and the barbican of Chelsea.

□ **FUNTINGS**, in Kirdford, West Sussex, a 17th-century Grade II listed house, is for sale. The house has five bedrooms and lies in 130 acres of pasture. Among those who have rented the house are Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit. Browns' Cranleigh office is selling the house for £2 million.

□ **ALAN LEVY**, the founder of the London Toy Museum and New Cavendish Books, is renting his flat in Stanley Gardens, SW1. The flat is packed with model trains, art, books and all kinds of gadgetry. The flat is for rent through Chard's Campden Hill Road office for £1,350 a week.

□ **THE Grade II listed Georgian house of Angela Billingham**, Labour MEP for Northamptonshire and Blaby, is for sale. The Ivy House, Adderbury, Oxfordshire, has five bedrooms and a cottage garden and is for sale through Lane Fox for £355,000.

□ **ALAN CLARK'S** former home at Town Farm House in Bratton Clovelly, Devon, where he lived before becoming an MP, has been auctioned for £167,000 through Knight Frank.

**BEN WAKEHAM**

## Co-ownership scheme set to fail the poor

**I**n April, the Government will change a homebuying scheme that has helped 50,000 people on to the first rung of the property ladder.

Those who qualify for help now, particularly Londoners and those from ethnic minorities, may soon be stuck in rented homes that are unsuitable.

The do-it-yourself shared ownership scheme (DIYSO), a homebuying incentive introduced by the Conservatives, also helps nurses and teachers whose low salaries make them unable to buy on the open market.

It allows a buyer to pay between 25 and 75 per cent of a new home, with a subsidised rent on the rest. If, for example, you took out a mortgage for 50 per cent of the property's value, the lower rent on the rest could in effect make the property 30 per cent cheaper than with a 100 per cent mortgage.

But last summer the Government said DIYSO would be scrapped this year in favour of a new scheme called Homebuy, where buyers would need to pay at least 75 per cent of the cost.

It is effectively an interest-free loan of 25 per cent. Steve Coleman, of the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust, is in favour, but he believes it only offers an improved deal to people who are better off.

Fifty-seven per cent of people who used DIYSO with Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust would not be able to afford Homebuy. Housing associations campaigned for the Government to change its mind, and in November, Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, said she would keep DIYSO. But from April it will be financed by local councils rather than the Housing Corporation.

There is no extra money going to the councils and campaigners are worried that next year the scheme in practice will be cut, especially in the capital.

Sue Elleny, the head of the National Housing Federation in London, says: "We were concerned about DIYSO being abolished as it allows people on lower incomes to own homes. The Homebuy scheme is not as accessible, particularly for those in London and the South East where property prices are high."

"Soon local authorities funding DIYSO will be pushed to make difficult decisions with limited funds. At the end of the day we are still arguing about a lack of resources to meet the range and level of need for affordable houses."

Realistically, DIYSO could be extinct in five months and London would be hardest hit.

Steve Nun, of Tower Housing Association, deals with boroughs in southeast London. "Southwark, Bromley and Greenwich are unlikely to earmark much money for DIYSO," he says. "They have other things they would rather spend this money on. As a result, some people will be stuck in the housing trap."

Last year his association helped 250 people to get housed under the

**A plan to help low-paid buyers to find cheaper homes may backfire, says Senay Boztas**

old government scheme or find accommodation in shared home ownership flats. In the case of apartments, a housing association buys or renovates a complex. Then prospective purchasers usually pay for half of their property and rent the rest. They can gradually buy the whole home, but unlike DIYSO, they cannot make their own choice of homes on the open market.

He says ethnic minorities may be hit particularly hard. Last year these families accounted for 40 per cent of DIYSO users.

Councils may have more cash for

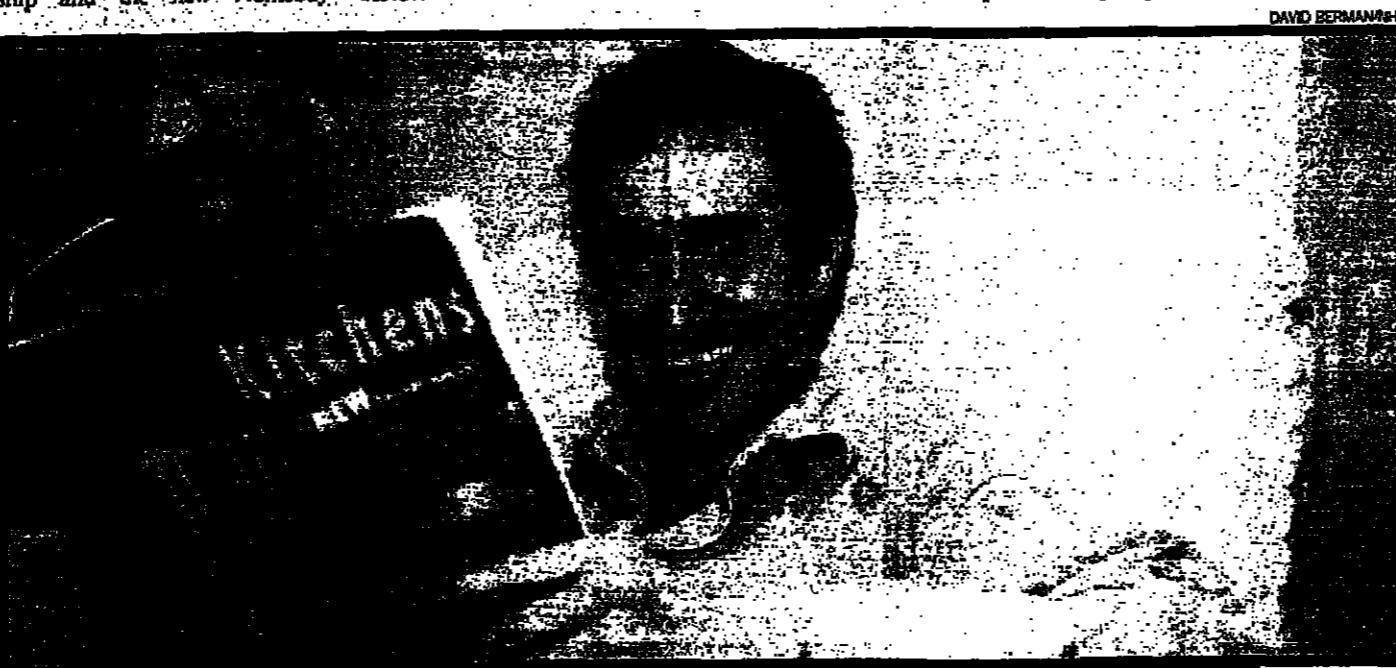
housing generally from Labour's capital receipts initiative, letting them use money from the sale of council houses during the eighties, but this is also used for repairing and building more social housing.

**D**uncan Bowie, of the London Housing Corporation, says: "For the first time we are leaving it up to councils to decide where to spend their money. Some may well back more renting instead of DIYSO. Early indications suggest fewer councils will use the Homebuy scheme. We are in discussions now to find out."

The future of the scheme is uncertain. It may still be available next year in boroughs such as Southwark, but many are worried it will disappear. Penny Sycraiva, of the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust, believes it will be obsolete within two years.

This year's funds are going fast. Even people racing to buy under DIYSO now may be disappointed. Both Tower Housing and Bush associations have stopped advertising because their money has already run out.

□ For details contact the Shared Ownership Advice Line on 0345 585757.



Actor Rupert Procter is enjoying his new role as homeowner: he now pays the same in mortgage payments as he previously spent on rent



The DIYSO scheme provided a passport to "desirable" and expensive Pimlico for Marc Lewis

DAVID BERMAN/HO

### A FOOT ON THE LADDER

**M**ARC LEWIS, a council worker, spent four years lodging with friends before DIYSO helped him to begin buying a home of his own.

The social policy research officer from the London Borough of Barnet earns just over £20,000 a year. But that was not enough for inner London property. Thanks to the DIYSO scheme, he now lives in Pimlico, southwest London, just behind the Tate Gallery.

Mr Lewis, 43, says: "I wanted to live in Pimlico where I was staying with friends. I liked the area but it is considered 'desirable' — so buying and renting are prohibitively expensive."

He moved into an £85,000 one-bedroom flat in late April, after gaining approval from his housing trust in February.

To buy his flat in the Millbank Estate he took out a mortgage with monthly payments of £460 to buy 60 per cent outright.

Now he pays £108 a month in rent to the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust and believes this is cheaper than private renting — although his monthly spend has doubled since his days of sharing.

He says: "I was ecstatic when I moved into an area that is safe and pleasant. It has everything London's attractions are within half an hour's walk. The scheme gets people on to the housing ladder and I would recommend it."

He says DIYSO may not be right for people with special needs or those who do not want a mortgage. He also warns of additional costs — surveyor's and legal fees were higher than he had expected.

"I had the costs budgeted virtually to the penny, but it still cost me more. For someone more financially strapped it could have been disastrous."

### A SENSE OF STABILITY

**R**upert Procter, a 36-year-old actor, feels very lucky to have been helped from DIYSO. He saw homelessness looming when his sister and her husband — with whom he lodged — wanted to start a family. He tried to move from their Wandsworth home but could not get a mortgage.

"Acting is notoriously unstable," he says. "You can have no work for two months and then a well-paid television job. I was on £16,000 a year and had saved £6,000, but Barclays was still suspicious."

He had nearly given up hope of buying a £69,000 two-bedroom cottage in Tooting when a fellow actor told him about the Notting Hill Home Ownership Trust scheme.

Spending all his savings on a mortgage down-payment with the Nationwide Building Society and

solicitor's fees, Mr Procter got an "unbelievable deal" from the association, which lent him the remaining £34,500, to be paid back at a rate of £120 a month.

With monthly mortgage repayments of £160, he is paying the same as he spent on rent — but now he has a home of his own.

"Getting my own home has been a change for the better without a doubt. It has made my life more complete," he says.

Now, with roles in television programmes, including *Peak Practice*, and earnings of £25,000, he is considering "staircasing": gradually buying a bigger share in the cottage eventually to own it outright.

DIYSO was the starting point, and Mr Procter feels that even contemplating abolishing the scheme is disgusting. He believes it is a way for people to make their lives better.



Lara is left  
open to  
dangers of  
home rule

England's late improvement unable to mask inferiority complex against dominant home team

# Familiar failings advance cause of new generation

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

WHEN the dismay subsides, along with the briefly inflamed hope, England will be left with only the stark realities of this Ashes series. For all their planning and preparation, certain things have scarcely changed. In areas of technique, and across the broad span of cricketing resources, Australia remain markedly superior.

What England have belatedly achieved here, to the great credit of their coach and captain, is a striking improvement in character under pressure. Adversity now seems to bring out their fight, rather than their fatalism, and there is no disputing that Australia were given a considerable scare over the last two Tests.

Quite why it should take the direst of situations to stir England to such heights, though, is their enduring frustration. Certainly, Alec Stewart, the captain, cannot explain it. "If I could, we'd have done something about it long ago," he said sadly.

Stewart, while proud of his players' resilience in the final fortnight, would wish nobody to be fooled by it. He is aware that until Christmas, when the series began its wholly unexpected finale, England had been woefully second-best and that it was only the fortuitous electric storm on the last afternoon in Brisbane that prevented them from being 30 down before the fightback began.

Indeed, their last-day performance in Hobart, against an Australia side exhorted to believe they were playing in a sixth Test, was so pitiful that Stewart and David Lloyd, the coach, considered it the worst day of England cricket they have been associated with.

It was that day, and its aftermath both here and in England, that accelerated speculation over the future personnel of team management. It will continue over a period of months, as the initiatives of an England committee, now chaired by Brian Bats, become clearer and the idea to appoint a full-time general manager takes shape.

By the end of the calendar year it is possible that the England team will have a new captain and chairman of selectors, too, along with a new coach. That, however, will not

necessarily improve the environment — now unrecognisably uniformed — or the playing results.

Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth, chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board, has been in Australia for the heady end-of-series days and made some interesting observations. On the eve of the final Test, he arrived at the Sydney Cricket Ground as the teams were in the nets. He marinated appreciatively about the facilities in Australia before surveying England's Test record and saying: "It's no good us being fifth, sixth or seventh in the world. We have to be in the top two." He is wise enough to know there was a connection.

Every Australian state ground has splendid, off-ground net pitches that mirror conditions in the middle. Most English counties have no proper nets, away from their playing area, so they cannot practise at all while a game is in process.

The difference in attitude that this represents is profound and one good reason Lloyd fancies a shot at coaching an Australian side.

Australian facilities do not end

"pair" for England and Fraser bowled unthreateningly and, eventually, not at all.

Fraser has lost the nip that gave his metronomic accuracy its extra dimension. Atherton's problems have been partly technical, partly ill-fortune and chiefly a back condition that is recurring with ever more frequency.

Graham Thorpe's departure for home, after only two Tests, was a dreadful blow for England. He, too, has long-term back trouble that does not bode well in the maelstrom of international cricket.

There are several others for whom this has been a disillusioning tour — John Crawley, Robert Croft and Dominic Cork among them. Ben Hollioake, justifiably chosen as an all-rounder of potential, has regressed, but Alex Tudor, the wild card, has the makings of an impressive cricketer if his suspect body stands up to the strain.

Certain problems characteristic of all recent England teams remain as great as ever. The bowling of Spin is in crisis; it must be if Ashley Giles was the best that could be produced from the hat to rival Australia's introduction of Shane Warne.

Wicketkeeping is in a scarcely healthier state. If Stewart's latest switch back to opening is to be sustained, Chris Read, the A team wicketkeeper from Nottinghamshire, may play Test cricket before the end of summer.

But there were some shining positives from this tour, four of them in particular. Nasser Hussain and Mark Ramprakash batted with conviction and consistency. Darren Gough has never bowled better or faster and Dean Headley, having looked as if the series would pass him by, took 19 wickets in the last three Tests.

Gough was the talisman, his beaming face and bursting biceps the measure of English pride, but the progress of Hussain and Ramprakash may be more significant.

Later matures — almost contemporaries of Atherton yet somehow seeming years younger — they may at last have the self-esteem, and the confidence of others, to be seriously considered when the captaincy becomes vacant.

## Certain problems remain as great as ever

with nets, any more than their cricketing culture ends with sledging. The infrastructure of assistance available to players is impressive and the fact that England are now beginning to imitate it is another thing that can be credited to Lloyd.

The coach, however, has not cured an air of futility whenever Australia appear on the fixture list, and he knows it. Senior players now acknowledge that a degree of subconscious defeatism has been present in Ashes games and that a new generation may be necessary to contest the next Australian series in 2001.

It certainly seems unlikely that Michael Atherton or Angus Fraser will take any part in that campaign and it would be no surprise if their Test careers ended in Melbourne. If their victory will be the consolation of an otherwise inappropriate farewell, for Atherton made his only

Test (in 1981, no 8) will not

## FINAL SYDNEY SCOREBOARD

Australia won toss.

AUSTRALIA: First Innings

\*M A Taylor c Hick b Headley 2  
(1min, 8 balls)

M J Storer c Headley b Headley 18  
(62min, 35 balls, 2 runs)

J Langer c Ramprakash b Tudor 28  
(54min, 39 balls, 2 runs)

C R Miller c Headley 10 (1 ball)

D S Lehmann c Hussain b Tudor 32  
(44min, 37 balls, 5 runs)

1 A Healy c Headley b Gough 14  
(48min, 28 balls, 1 run)

S K Warne not out

(1min, 1 ball)

S C G MacGill c Headley 0  
(2min, 1 ball)

C R Miller c Gough 0  
(1min, 1 ball)

G D McGrath c Hick b Headley 0  
(2min, 2 balls)

Extras (D, 2, no 8) 11

Total (87.3 overs, 372 runs)

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-16 (Storer 14, 22min, 34 balls, 3 runs); 2-17 (Taylor 1, 2min, 8 balls, 2 runs); 3-18 (Headley 1, 10 balls); 4-21 (Warne 1, 10 runs); 5-22 (Langer 1, 10 runs); 6-23 (Miller 1, 10 runs); 7-24 (Lehmann 1, 10 runs); 8-25 (Healy 1, 10 runs); 9-26 (Gough 1, 10 runs); 10-27 (MacGill 1, 10 runs); 11-28 (Storer 1, 10 runs); 12-29 (Headley 1, 10 runs); 13-30 (Warne 1, 10 runs); 14-31 (Langer 1, 10 runs); 15-32 (Miller 1, 10 runs); 16-33 (Lehmann 1, 10 runs); 17-34 (Healy 1, 10 runs); 18-35 (Gough 1, 10 runs); 19-36 (MacGill 1, 10 runs); 20-37 (Storer 1, 10 runs); 21-38 (Headley 1, 10 runs); 22-39 (Warne 1, 10 runs); 23-40 (Langer 1, 10 runs); 24-41 (Miller 1, 10 runs); 25-42 (Lehmann 1, 10 runs); 26-43 (Healy 1, 10 runs); 27-44 (Gough 1, 10 runs); 28-45 (MacGill 1, 10 runs); 29-46 (Storer 1, 10 runs); 30-47 (Headley 1, 10 runs); 31-48 (Warne 1, 10 runs); 32-49 (Langer 1, 10 runs); 33-50 (Miller 1, 10 runs); 34-51 (Lehmann 1, 10 runs); 35-52 (Healy 1, 10 runs); 36-53 (Gough 1, 10 runs); 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## RUGBY UNION

# Wasps aim to get title challenge back on course

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THREE of the best-known clubs in London rugby are vying for supremacy in the capital at the halfway stage of the Allied Dunbar Premiership — nor can any of them be discounted as potential winners of the first division. For the time being, however, neither Saracens, Wasps nor Harlequins will look much further than the next game.

At the weekend Wasps and Saracens changed places in the table, thanks to the unexpected defeat Wasps suffered at the hands of West Hartlepool in the bleak North East.

They can reverse that situation when they entertain Saracens at Loftus Road this evening and, if there was any hint of complacency among Wasps at the weekend, there will be none now. "West Hartlepool played particularly well and we played particularly

badly," Nigel Melville, director of rugby at Wasps, said.

"It shows you can't afford to have a poor game in this league and I have no doubt that West will do the same to other teams before this season is through. But I don't have any problem about the big games, about players raising themselves for the occasion."

Wasps stood as firm as any when they went to Vicarage Road in October. They came away with a 31-17 win in a game which — allied to their wayward display against Harlequins nine days earlier — caused Saracens far more doubt about their immediate future than September had suggested they should have.

Moreover, Saracens remain without Francois Pienaar, their captain-coach, whose foot injury keeps him out. However, Alain Pienaud

returns at fly half, having come through a fitness test yesterday on his "dead leg".

That will be a considerable relief to Gavin Johnson, who returns to his natural position of full back, from which he scored an injury-time try against Wasps ten weeks ago.

Wasps have moved Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain, from blind-side flanker to No 8, a position that he frequently occupies in the national side, whatever the number on his back may say. That allows the inclusion of Eben Roelli, who has been in good form of late.

"Where we play Lawrence depends upon whom he is playing with," Melville said.

"We are very pleased with Eben and we have Joe Worsley on the bench, who can act as an impact player."

Andy Reed is preferred to Simon Shaw at lock. Simon Mitchell and Darren Molloy rejoining the front row.

Mitchell is set for a decent run at hooker as Trevor Lupton, the stalwart Samoan, is likely to be missing for three weeks after damaging a knee against Gloucester. Paul Sampson, who won such plaudits for the decisive try against Gloucester, gives way on the wing to Shane Roiser.

Gloucester have a problem to resolve with David Sims, their captain, who has been omitted from the first XV since mid-November. Sims, 29, has been overshadowed by Mark Cornwell, while Rob Fidler, his fellow lock, has been leading the side.

Sims has been linked with Cardiff and Bristol but has 18 months of his contract remaining and Richard Hill, the director of rugby, is keen not to lose one of his forward assets.

"We would like Dave to stay at the club and fight for his place," Hill said.

## Toulouse surrender their grip on trophy

BIGGER and better than its equivalent last year, The Times Trophy has thrown up an unlikely quarter-final line-up with three of the semi-finalists from last season, including both finalists, failing to make the pool stages (Michael Aylwin writes).

The tournament, contested by the leading university rugby clubs in Europe, is notoriously difficult to predict, with such a high turnover of players from year to year, but there were nevertheless some eye-opening results from the opening round.

Toulouse, the holders, so comfortable last season, have already capitulated to University College Dublin, the dominant force of Irish university

rugby. They now go through to face Brunel, conquerors of Swansea, the beaten finalists last season, at the Richmond Athletic Ground today.

Trinity Carmarthen are the only Welsh side left in the draw after defeats for their more illustrious compatriots, Swansea and University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC), who reached the semi-finals last season. UWIC lost to Loughborough, who now travel to the south of France to meet Grenoble, the French champions. Trinity Carmarthen entertain Harper Adams, who had a resounding win over Durham, while the fourth quarter-final sees University College Cork play hosts to Northumbria.

A SUPERB take-out from Ian Schuback, who is regarded by bowls enthusiasts as a sort of Crocodile Dundee, turned almost certain defeat into a 7-4, 7-3, 4-7, 2-7, 7-6 victory for him and his fellow Australian, Ian Taylor, in the first round of the world indoor pairs championship at Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast yesterday.

Having won the first two sets, Taylor and Schuback were pegged back by Rowan Brassey, of New Zealand, and Steve Glasson, of Australia, who won the next two and looked the likely winners when they led 6-5 in the decider.

On what turned out to be the last end, Brassey set up a match lie, but Taylor, the man with the impossibly complicated delivery, trailed the jack expertly to a back position, and settled down approximately 18 inches in front of the little white ball.

Glasson, ranked No 1 in

the world, held a set lie, with three good shots near the jack, when a Schuback bullseye removed the shot off the rink. Glasson, surprisingly unable to repeat the accuracy of the first bowl, then finished two yards short.

Five bowlers from the southern hemisphere participated yesterday in the first match. Mark McMahon, who lives and works in Sydney, partnered David Gourlay, of Scotland, into the quarter-finals.

McMahon lends a cosmopolitan dimension to the arena: born in Dunfermline, he played bowls internationally for Hong Kong. He gave Gourlay a good start, matching and often beating Les Gillett. The Times' Taylor English Bowler of the Year in 1998, to the jack.

ROB HOWARTH

## SPORT IN BRIEF

## Gateshead choose Walters as captain

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: Kerrod Walters, 31, the former Australia hooker, was yesterday named captain of the new Gateshead Thunder club, whose first competitive game is against Leeds Rhinos at Gateshead International Stadium in the JTB Super League, on March 7. Walters was in the second wave of imported players who arrived from Australia on New Year's Day. Work permits are still awaited for the last two Australian players to be signed. Brett Green, a forward, and Brett Grogan, a centre, Sheffield Eagles, who failed with two earlier attempts to sign Paul Anderson, 21, from St Helens, have agreed to pay the £10,000 asking price for the utility player.

■ CRICKET: Somerset have appointed Jamie Cox, the Tasmanian batsman, as their captain and overseas player for next season.

Cox has been the Tasmania vice-captain under David Boon's leadership for the past three seasons. Peter Anderson, Somerset's chief executive, said: "We were looking for a proven top-order batsman with captaincy ability who would be available for the whole season. We believe we have found such a player."

■ SQUASH: Two exceptional players emerged from the semi-finals of the CGU British junior open championships at Abbeydale Park in Sheffield yesterday. James Willstrop, a 6ft 3in 15-year-old from Pontefract, defeated Alberto Manso, of Spain, 19, 9-5, 9-3, 9-1 in the semi-final of the boys' under-17 championship while Omar Refaat, 14, from Egypt, defeated Dylan Bennett, of Holland, 9-2, 9-4, 9-3 in the boys' under-15 championship.



Gillett, of England, watched by McMahon, of Australia, rolls the jack during their first-round pairs match yesterday

## Schuback keeps his nerve

David Rhys Jones watches one of the most endearing characters in bowls upstage Australia's No 1

Robert Newman, Gillies' skip, who will be 24 next month, played well enough to suggest he will be a force to be reckoned with in future, and the match looked destined to go the full distance.

The English pair won the first set by the narrowest of margins, and, although they lost the next two, they appeared comfortable in the fourth, only to concede two successive doubles and allow the No 5 seeds to ease through, 6-7, 7-5, 7-4, 7-4.

"We played two loose ends, and paid the penalty," Newman, who reached the quarter-finals of the world indoor singles championship last year, said. "It's especially important to be consistent in two-bowl pairs, and they were more consistent than us — particularly towards the end of each set."

FIRST ROUND: M McMahon (Aus) and D Gourlay (Sco) v I Gillett and R Newman (Eng) 6-7, 7-5, 7-4, 7-4; Taylor and I Schuback (Aus) v R Newman and S Glasson (Eng) 7-4, 7-3, 4-7, 7-4, 7-6

# SATURDAY. ANYTHING BUT A DAY OF REST.

THE TIMES

SPORT  
Vision  
WEEKEND  
metro  
the times  
magazine  
meg@

SUNDAY

12.50

FORMULA 1

1.20

FORMULA 1

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FORMULA 1





# Garnished with a balcony and sea view

Why did Padstow's most famous chef travel all the way to Naples to kick off his new cookery series, *Rick Stein's Seafood Odyssey* (BBC2)? Because that way he could be sure of laying his hands on that key ingredient needed to cook successfully even the most simple dishes abroad: a large balcony that looks out over a spectacular view. Antonio Carluccio did it, also in Italy (though he occasionally had to improvise by cooking on a hillside). Ken Hom did it, sun-frying his scallops al fresco in California. Now Rick's done it. You can feel pretty confident that if a country doesn't have the sort of architecture that accommodates balconies, then its cuisine doesn't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world of television cookery. Delia Smith made a half-hearted stab at it in her recent series by having a new kitchen specially built in her glass-walled conservatory: it afforded leafy views

over the countryside beyond, but it just wasn't the same.

Not that Rick actually travelled to the Naples we ourselves see when we get off the plane. He was in a mysterious Naples which had no 16-year-olds avoiding traffic jams by driving their Vespas along the pavement, or people looking for horses' heads they could slip into their enemies' beds. In Rick's Naples, the men behaved like extras in a *Rebel* movie, and the women all talked like Sophia Loren. "This is like making love," purred Giovanna Raffone, a Neapolitan explaining the depth of her passion for food. "Making love is not just physical sex—it's love for everything, the flowers, the sea. Love for cooking is part of all that."

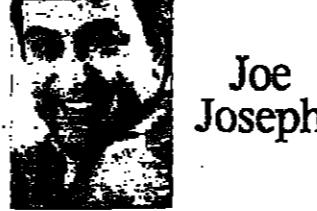
This is, in fact, exactly why Rick chose to begin his odyssey in Naples: "because it's a city where life revolves around food... people are brought up on the simple things. They have a focus on ingredients and care about them. Italy is about passion and flavours. They couldn't give a stuff about coriander and lemongrass. They just want to know where the best tomatoes and lemons come from." In this, Rick pinpointed one of the glories of Italian food: Italians have been cooking these dishes for centuries and have reached the conclusion that if they could be improved by adding galangal and coconut milk, then someone must have done it by now. Critics might call this attitude insular. Fans rejoice for it.

**Y**et in his quest for simplicity and an alarming mood swings, one moment he's a gentle soul, rhapsodising romantically about tomatoes; the next he ignites like a chip pan fire, inveigling against "flam-farm garnishes" and "bits of whatnot on the top"; and the next he's reciting emotionally

from Tennyson and Conrad, as though afflicted by a peculiarly articulate form of Tourette's syndrome.

Naturism documentaries may not be the new rock 'n' roll, but they're fast turning into the new television cookery show. Soon everybody'll be making one. You wait years for a film-maker to take his clothes off in front of the camera, and then suddenly two naked film-

## REVIEW



Joe Joseph

makers come along at once. Don Boyd's *Full Frontal in Flip Flops* (ITV) lost some of its punch coming so soon after Channel 4's documentary which covered similar ground (flesh?). It was another gawp at a bunch of people you won't be seeing rifling enthusiastically through the clothes racks in the January sales. But what it lost in punch it made up for in paunch—Boyd's paunch—as we watched the director struggle entertainingly with the dilemma of whether or not to join his subjects and go naked at Sue and Dave's wedding reception along with the guests.

Any thought that the naked option might have been his way of saving money on hiring a morning coat at Moss Bros was soon dispelled when Boyd took to the nudist lifestyle with all the passion of the newly liberated convert. Once he'd taken the plunge, it was hard for Boyd to keep his genitals out of camera shot. But Boyd also took

the trouble to point out that nudism is not just about a group of people who feel persecuted by society because they find clothes restrictive. He interviewed James Scarlett, who was raised by Customs officers they'd intercepted nudist visitors showing a French holiday camp, in which children were frolicking naked. Scarlett eventually won his case.

**B**ut what was intriguing about this episode was not that it made you wonder why anybody would want to watch a video of a French holiday camp, it was the startling advocacy skills of Scarlett's lawyer, who told Boyd that: "You cannot possibly take them like this and take them of the market and all of a sudden paedophilia as a problem will disappear. As a lawyer I have occasionally had to deal with cases of bestiality; that doesn't mean to say that you shouldn't be allowed to take

photographs of sheep." It's certainly a bewitching argument, especially if you've had a lot to drink.

Launching a new series of *Great Railway Journeys* (BBC2), Ian Hislop travelled mostly hopefully across India—from Calcutta in the East to Jaisalmer in the West—somewhat pulling off the trick of doing many of the travelogue things you see television visitors do in India but making them seem fresh. Maybe Hislop's engaging and observant journey will do for Indian tourism what Delia did for such familiar staples as eggs and omelette pans, and we'll all find ourselves booking holidays on the enticing "palace on wheels" from Jaipur to Jodhpur this year. But as he hung, sweating, from the strap of one of Calcutta's new subway trains, Hislop—packed in as snug as a cigarette in a new pack of Marlboros—told us: "You don't really go to India. You get in it." Still, at least they weren't all naked, too.

BBC1	
6.00am <i>Business Breakfast</i> (41254)	
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (71983)	
9.00 <i>Kilroy</i> (T) (8936761)	
9.45 <i>The Vanessa Show</i> (T) (5308631)	
10.55 <i>News: Weather</i> (T) (7275525)	
11.00 <i>Real Rooms</i> (2265902)	
11.25 <i>Can't Cook, Won't Cook</i> (T) (2257511)	
11.55 <i>News: Weather</i> (T) (1488457)	
12.00pm <i>Call My Bluff</i> (53322)	
12.30am <i>Battersea Dogs' Home</i> (33056)	
1.00 <i>One O'Clock News</i> (T) (80070)	
1.30 <i>Regional News: Weather</i> (8869761)	
1.40 <i>Neighbours</i> : Lou, Madge and Harold continue feuding (T) (56556877)	
2.05 <i>Inside: A tabloidocrat's unwillingly becomes involved in narcotics dealing</i> . With Raymond Burr (T) (7932051)	
2.55 <i>Going for a Song</i> (8824508)	
3.20 <i>The Weather Show</i> : Weather stories and reports (T) (226547)	
3.25 <i>Children's BBC: Playdays</i> (2275326)	
3.45 <i>Little Monsters</i> (220457) 8.20 <i>Child's Play</i> (227415) 4.10 <i>See It Saw It</i> (423411) 4.35 <i>The Wild House</i> (199163) 5.00 <i>Newround</i> (5738322)	
5.10 <i>Blue Peter</i> (878877)	
5.35 <i>Neighbours</i> (T) (789864)	
6.00 <i>St O'Clock News: Weather</i> (T) (158)	
6.30 <i>Regional News Magazine</i> (321)	
7.00 <i>Money for Old Rope</i> : Johnathan Meadoff offers tips on making the most of financial investments (T) (1308)	
7.30 <i>CHANCE</i> : Dream House: New series. Carol Vorderman and a team of experts attempt to build a dream house for the 21st century (T) (235)	
8.00 <i>Changing Rooms</i> : New series. The team come to the rescue of four neighbours whose kitchens are badly in need of a revamp (T) (2995)	
8.30 <i>Battersea Dogs' Home</i> : Shauna Lowry introduces the first of a series of lightights from the daytime documentary. The comedian Sean Hughes visits the shelter to choose a companion for his dog Bill (T) (610918)	
8.50 <i>National Lottery: Amazing Luck Stories</i> : Musician David Currie celebrates an unexpected success (T) (939777)	
9.00 <i>One O'Clock News: Regional News: Weather</i> (T) (6167)	
9.30 <i>The X-Files</i> : A computer program with its own reasoning and conscience destroys its creator and plans further destruction (T) (750341)	
10.15 <i>CHANCE</i> : Jobs for the Boys: New series. Hale and Pace by their hand at sports commentary (T) (226325)	
11.10 <i>Volcano: Fire on the Mountain</i> (1997) <i>Premiere</i> : Dan Coates stars in this disaster movie about an erupting ski resort thrown into panic by the eruption of a nearby volcano. Directed by Graeme Campbell (T) (355815)	
12.35am <i>The Cassandra Crossing</i> (1976) A wounded terrorist carrying a deadly virus boards a transcontinental train, risking the lives of all on board. Disaster epic starring Sir Laurence Olivier and Marlon Brando. Directed by George Cukor. (T) (685738)	
2.35 <i>Weather</i> (4335552)	
2.40 <i>BBC News 24</i> (2470216)	

BBC2	
7.00am <i>Children's BBC: Breakfast Show</i> : <i>Dilly the Dinosaur</i> (784539) 7.05 <i>Teletubbies</i> (220186) 7.30 <i>Yog's Treasure Hunt</i> (2594983) 7.50 <i>The Really Wild Show</i> (5166148) 8.20 <i>Tez-Mania</i> (9134148) 8.40 <i>Polka Dot Shorts</i> (6026203) 8.55 <i>Dilly the Dinosaur</i> (6588070) 9.00 <i>Brum</i> (7381865) 9.10 <i>The Phil Silvers Show</i> (6748939) 9.35 <i>The Phil Silvers Show</i> (5129349) 10.00 <i>Children's BBC: Teletubbies</i> (41693) 10.30 <i>FILM: The Battle of Austerlitz</i> (42926) 12.30pm <i>Working Lunch</i> (81148) 1.00 <i>Brum</i> (7384706)	
1.10 <i>The Arts and Crafts Show</i> : <i>Home Franse</i> Stock looks at antique clocks (2762148)	
2.10 <i>Darts: World Professional Championship</i> : Highlights of yesterday's second-round matches. Includes news at 2.40 and 3.25 (9837693)	
3.00 <i>Star Trek: The Next Generation</i> : A boy rescued from a wrecked spacecraft claims aliens attacked the ship—but is he telling the truth? (T) (462222)	
3.45 <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> : A series of unpleasant accidents disrupts the cheerleader auditions (T) (225525)	
3.50 <i>Tales from the Riverbank</i> : Geoffrey Palmer looks at aspects of angling, spending a summer day fishing a trout stream (T) (8777)	
3.55 <i>ITV News</i> : Weather (T) (1488457)	
4.10 <i>Antiques Roadshow</i> (226547)	
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6.45 <i>ITV News</i> : Weather (T) (1488457)	
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## RUGBY UNION 36

Dallaglio gears up  
Wasps to renew  
challenge for title

## SPORT

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6 1999

Bassett angry over dismissal

# Forest target Atkinson in survival fight

BY RICHARD HOBSON

THE uneasy and occasionally fractious relationship between Dave Bassett and the Nottingham Forest plc directors ended yesterday with an acrimonious departure from the club that he guided into the FA Carling Premiership last season. Bassett had read of his impending dismissal in the morning newspapers before his worst fears were confirmed by Phil Soar, the chief executive.

Although Micky Adams, his assistant, has been placed in temporary charge for the visit to Coventry City on Saturday, the board will meet 24 hours earlier to discuss a replacement. Ron Atkinson, absent on holiday in Bermuda, is the clear favourite, having shepherded Sheffield Wednesday to safety in 1997-98. The task at Forest, in twentieth place and without a win in 17 league games, a Premiership record, would appear to be harder still.

Soar confirmed that Atkinson

son was among the candidates, but said that no contact had yet been made "to my knowledge". Any approach will come from Irving Scholar, the director in charge of the club's football affairs, who decided Bassett's fate.

In an unfortunate slip of the tongue as he read a prepared statement, Soar said that Bassett was leaving "by mutual consent", only to correct the error in his next breath. For once, the garrulous Bassett kept his observations succinct before he left the City Ground for the last time. The relative brevity of his comments amplified his frustration.

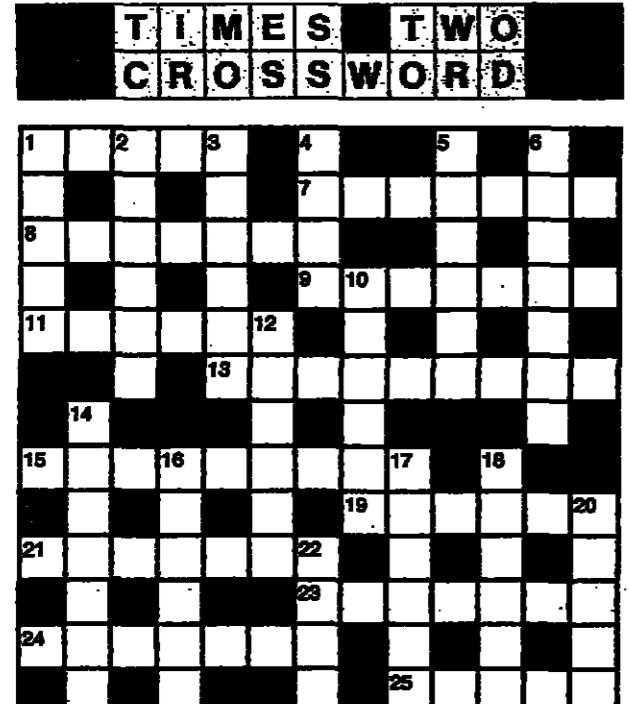
"Getting the sack is part and parcel of football. It is a volatile business and I am more upset at the way it has been done," Bassett, whose compensation payment may amount to several hundred thousand pounds, said.

"The club have done it in an undignified manner... to see

DAVID TYRRELL/SPORT



Bassett, left, returns from training to hear his fate yesterday



No 1607

**ACROSS**  
1 Be oblique (5)  
7 Oppressive rule (7)  
8 Within hearing (7)  
9 Having extraneous perception (7)  
11 Without strength (6)  
13 Obstreperous (9)  
15 Full of passionate unreason (9)  
19 Humbert's obsession (Nabokov) (6)  
21 Distorted (eg message) (7)  
23 Quito its capital (7)  
24 Displaying no initiative (7)  
25 Linger (5)  
22 Profound (4)

**DOWN**  
1 Muffler (5)  
2 Bad (egg) (6)  
3 Romeo kills him (Shak.) (6)  
4 Measure: stair (4)  
5 Abandon, make void (6)  
6 Very old (7)  
10 Gregarious like Rousseau's Contract (6)  
12 White stout fur (6)  
14 Muslim fasting month (7)  
16 Place of lying in wait (6)  
17 Plaguey grasshopper (6)  
18 Load-bearing beam (6)  
20 Regular, imposing display (5)  
22 Profound (4)

**SOLUTION TO NO 1606**  
**ACROSS:** 7 Hypochondria 9 Rapport 10 Padre 11 Hoop 12 Typcast 15 Plymouth 17 Lif 19 Lathi 21 Overall 22 Get the hang of  
**DOWN:** 1 Symphony 2 Colon 3 Chatty 4 Snippet 5 Bred 6 Take its toll 8 Archipelago 13 Animator 14 Tonight 16 Trophy 18 Jenny 20 Tote

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Stewart, the England captain, third from left, and his players look on as Australia celebrate their victory in the fifth Test and the Ashes series

## England revival gives Stewart opportunity to bat for Lloyd

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

SYDNEY (fourth day of five):  
Australia beat England by 98 runs

held high, even in Australia. The final Test of a series far more memorable than had seemed likely ended 20 minutes after lunch on its fourth afternoon. The fantasy of an England victory faded fast once Stuart MacGill, upstaging Shane Warne once more, had eliminated the middle order on his way to match figures of 12 for 107.

It was an outcome that had seemed inevitable since England lost the toss, yet they had hurried themselves at Australia with such ferocity that, fleetingly, one of the most remarkable of all Test victories had been a possibility. So often, it has been the manner of defeat that

three Tests I hadn't seen much change in their cricket, but the last two were different."

A fourth morning of clear blue skies and hot sunshine brought another fine crowd, alive with expectation. Yesterday's attendance of 27,754 raised the match aggregate to 142,282, rescuing the budget of the Australian Board after the Boxing Day washout and three-day finish in Melbourne. It also proved beyond valid argument that the Ashes retain its status as the greatest of cricket's attractions.

It required optimism on a grand scale to believe England's eight remaining wickets would yield the 183 runs still required, but they had probably not bargained on losing one of their most important wickets to seam bowling. Glenn McGrath dismissed Mark Ramprakash through a smart, low catch at first slip by Taylor, taking him past Allen Border to the world catches record of 157. Warne opened from the other end and repeatedly spun the ball past the bat without reward. "He's not at his best yet," Taylor said. "As they say in racing, he will be better for the run, but although one leggie got 12 wickets and the other only two, I didn't think there was much between them."

Nasser Hussain was once again batting with great skill and intensity, working the ball into gaps for the singles that stoked his team-mates. It was a violent square drive for four, though, that saw McGrath out of the attack and ushered the game towards a rapid end.

MacGill, unrecognisable from the erratic bowler who began the series in Brisbane, has dismayed England followers. Here, it was the manner of it that cheered the thousands of supporters who had turned Sydney, like Barbados a year ago, into an outpost of St John's Wood.

Praise came from all quarters. Typically, Mark Taylor was gracious in victory. The Australia captain said he felt England had played better in Sydney than in the Melbourne Test they won. He added: "We have been challenged over the last ten days. England haven't just made us wobble, they've nerved us. They bowled us out twice in each game, which I had always thought would be their problem. In the first

met on and off the field." There seems little doubt, though, that the old Etonian will stand.

It is a pity that it will take so long, he said, "but the constitution of the FA only allows the election of the chairman once a year at its annual meeting."

That will ensure five months of electioneering until the vote in June but none of the expected candidates would declare their hand yesterday for fear of being seen as too eager. "I am flattered by the attention in the press," Sheepshanks said, "but we will have to wait and see. It is a huge job with a lot of challenges to be

his hand but seems certain to stand, while David Dean, vice-chairman of Arsenal, and Dave Richards, chairman of Sheffield Wednesday, will canvas opinion from Premiership chairman first.

Next week, the FA's executive committee will have the first look at a working party's proposals for reform of the association. These are expected to include a plan to cut drastically the number of councillors from the amateur game by merging county associations into larger regions. How much power the FA Carling Premiership clubs should wield is certain to cause lively debate as will suggestions that Wiseman's successor should become the organisation's first paid chairman.

Applications for the post of chief executive will also be sifted through next week, and it has to be decided whether the appointment should be made before or after the issue of the chairmanship is resolved.

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601: the

Little big Horn  
Age 37  
Fee 30  
We are  
Family at W  
Prince